THE GREAT RELIEVER

GEORGE FREDERICK GUNDELFINGER



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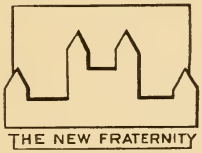
THE GREAT RELIEVER

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A FOUR-ACT PLAY

by

GEORGE FREDERICK GUNDELFINGER



THE NEW FRATERNITY
Literature & Music
SEWICKLEY PENNSYLVANIA

PS 3513
.U79G7
1922

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MAR 20 1922

THE GREAT RELIEVER

THE CHARACTERS
(in order of entrance)

MISS WILLIAMS, *a student nurse,*
KARL LINDENFELS, *a composer,*
CONSTANCE WAKEFIELD, *a trained nurse,*
MARIANNE LE GRAND, *"prima donna,"*
HARBISON CALDWELL, *a physician,*
An Errand Boy,
TONY, *a violinist,*
MAURICE GUILBERT, *a theatrical manager,*
HERR SCHMETTERLING, *an assistant conductor,*
ABIGAIL STRONG, *a trained nurse,*
A Registration-Day Clerk,
MRS. CHANDLER, *an aged invalid,*
MISS STAFFORD, *a trained nurse,*
A Janitor;
Chorus Girls and Men, Soldiers,
Invalids, Nurses, etc., etc.

TIME: June, 1917
PLACE: America

ACT I

ACT I

SCENE—A Special Private Room in a Hospital.
It is the last room on the side of a hall which terminates in a sun-parlor. The doorway into the hall is at the extreme left front of the stage. It is a large doorway—large enough to admit a bed. There are a framed set of rules on the back of the door. When the door stands open (the hinges being on the far side), one gets a glimpse into the sun-parlor, which is furnished in wicker. On the far side of this door there is an electric bracket-lamp. A mahogany chair stands under it. Against the wall of the room, on the far side of the chair, stands a mahogany dresser; on it are two empty glass vases and a small tumbler of antiseptic solution in which there is a thermometer. There is a wastebasket between the dresser and the chair. The extreme rear of the room is in the form of an alcove. Against the wall of this alcove, opposite the dresser, stands a small mahogany table. In the rear wall, between the dresser and the table, there is a large window through which one can see the trees and the houses on the other side of the street, the room being on the ground floor. An ordinary mahogany chair stands before this window. To the right of the alcove, parallel to the first window but farther front, is a second window not quite so large. A folding screen stands before it. In front of the screen stands a low white iron cot, dressed with fresh linens. Against the wall, between the cot and the screen, there is a small white iron table, a glass and a tray on the upper shelf, a reading-lamp and a call-bell with connecting wires on the lower. Just around the corner of the wall, to the right of the cot, stands a small white cabinet, on the top of which are a washbowl and a pitcher. To the right of this cabinet there is a small

door giving access to a clothes-closet. At right angles to this door, on the extreme right front of the stage, is another door to a bathroom. A mahogany Morris chair with green plush cushions stands at the front center of the stage. The walls and ceiling are painted grey. The doors are plain mahogany; the door frames and the window frames, white. Buff curtains hang at the windows. The window shades are not drawn. The floor is buff tile, with inconspicuous oriental rugs placed here and there.

It is a very dismal rainy day, and there are occasional peals of thunder and faint flashes of lightning.

Miss Williams, *a very plump student-nurse in a blue gingham dress, white shoulder-apron, white cap and black shoes, enters from the hall, carrying linens, small cloths and a pitcher of ice water. After resting the pitcher and small cloths on the white iron table, she places covers on the dresser and on the table in the alcove. Then she covers the green cushions of the Morris chair with fresh slips of flowered creton.*

A rolling noise is heard in the hall. Miss Williams *opens the door wide to guide a white iron bed which is being shoved into the room headforemost.* Karl Lindenfels, *still under the influence of ether, lies in the bed on the flat of his back. His blonde hair is plainly visible on the pillow; there is a greenish cast to his thin face. He still wears the long white shirt from the operating-room and is covered with a sheet from the chest down. A chart for recording pulse, temperature, etc. lies on the foot of the bed.* Constance Wakefield, *a trained nurse in the usual immaculately white uniform, white cap and white shoes, is pushing the bed from the foot. With* Miss William's *assistance, she rolls the bed across the floor to its position directly above the cot, the bed being the usual high kind found in hospitals.* Miss Williams *then leaves the room.*

Constance Wakefield *is about thirty years of age. She is*

of average height, not heavy, yet well-preserved and unseemingly strong. Her natural poise and quiet manner indicate that she has had considerable experience in her profession. Her brown hair, neatly and becomingly arranged, accentuates, by contrast, the slight pallor of her face—not the pallor due to anxiety but to self-sacrifice and lack of sleep. Her features are well defined; her lips are thin and unobtrusively colored; there is a faint tinge of pink on her cheeks; her expressive blue eyes have a soft, steady, peaceful gaze. Her hands seem capable of transmitting healing power.

Constance *carries the chart to the dresser, takes the thermometer from the antiseptic solution, and opens the dresser drawer to obtain a counterpane. Standing on the far side of the bed, she arranges her patient's head more comfortably on his pillow, places the thermometer under his tongue, smooths out the sheet and spreads the counterpane over it, carefully lifting his arms from under the cover. She takes the lamp and the call-bell from the shelf under the table and fastens them to the head of the bed. In the meanwhile,* Miss Williams *has returned with a pair of low men's shoes in her hand and with a blue serge suit and other garments on her arm. She places them on the Morris chair and leaves the room again.* Constance *takes her patient's pulse using the watch on her wrist; she then removes the thermometer from his mouth and places it in the glass on the dresser, where she records her observations on the chart.*

Marianne Le Grand *enters dramatically from the hall. She is fully a head taller than the nurse—a woman with a slender serpentine form, jet black hair, an acquiline nose, dancing sensual eyes and twitching rouged lips. The forced animation of her face helps to disguise its youthlessness. She wears a smart raincoat, a black hat and gown, boots with extremely high heels, and carries a handbag and an umbrella.*

MARIANNE—*(leaning her dripping umbrella against the door frame and rushing to the bedside)* Oh! Mon cher Karl! Mon petit génie! *(She places her handkerchief to her eyes and turns to meet* Constance *who is coming forward.)* Is he out of zee danger, nurse?

CONSTANCE—The doctors said it was high time for the operation. According to the chart, the appendix was much inflamed and distended with considerable pus. Sooner or later it would have burst.

MARIANNE—And zen?

CONSTANCE—Peritonitis, which is often fatal.

MARIANNE—*(clasping her hands tragically, her bracelets jingling)* Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! How fortunate zat I find him in time! He was all stretch out on zee floor in his studio, Mademoiselle.

CONSTANCE—But he must have had other attacks before this?

MARIANNE—Yes; but zey were not serious—zat is he would not take zem seriously. He take nozing seriously; he do everyzing wizout effort—everyzing. His composing, his musique—zey come so naturelle wiz him. Un petit génie! You have surely heard of him, Mademoiselle—Mademoiselle—I forget zee name?

CONSTANCE—Wakefield.

MARIANNE—You have surely heard of him, Mademoiselle Wakefield. He is zee talk of zee town.

CONSTANCE—I am sorry to say I have never heard of Mr. Lindenfels before. You see we nurses are pretty much shut off from the world. I seldom go to the music halls or to the theatre.

MARIANNE—Ah, you are like nuns in zee convent—n'est-ce pas?—always wiz invalids and zee grey walls. *(She glances about the room, rolling her large eyes.)* Ugh! zee grey walls—nozing but zee grey walls. *(She walks to the large window.)* Ugh! and zee grey day, too. Rain—rain continuelle! But I am glad Monsieur Lindenfels has a room on zee first floor, where he can see zee street and zee peoples.

CONSTANCE—*(lifting the trousers from the Morris chair)* The rooms higher up are far more quiet.

MARIANNE—*(coming forward)* Monsieur Lindenfels must not have zee quiet. Non! *(She removes her raincoat, placing it on the chair near the door.)*

CONSTANCE—Most patients prefer the quiet; they need it, too.

MARIANNE—Mais Monsieur Lindenfels—il n'est pas ordinaire; il est un petit génie. You not speak French; I forget. Monsieur Lindenfels need zee couleur and zee motion for inspiration.

CONSTANCE—*(catching a watch which has fallen from the trousers)* His watch! I almost dropped it on the floor.

MARIANNE—*(taking the watch from her)* Ah, he would have been tres sad if you had broken it. Zee watch is a present from me, Mademoiselle Wakefield. *(She opens the watch.)* See! he wear my picture in zee front. Ah, it is already half past ten. When did zee operation take place?

CONSTANCE—*(walking to the dresser with the trousers)* The exact hour is on the chart. *(She takes up the chart.)* You see I write everything about my patient on this chart. The operation was at 9.20.

MARIANNE—Zen he has been in zee anezetic for over an hour? *(She walks to the bedside.)* How long before he will wake?

CONSTANCE—*(returning the chart to the dresser and folding the trousers)* Shortly, I presume.

MARIANNE—Why do he look so green—so cadavéreux?

CONSTANCE—Some persons look that way under such conditions.

MARIANNE—And so gloomy a day! Zat make him look worse. (Constance *crosses on the way to the clothes-closet.)* Ah, take good care of zee trousers. He is so particulièr about zee creases. Will he need more clothes?

CONSTANCE—*(opening the closet door)* It will be at least a week before he is permitted to get out of bed. Until then he will need only pajamas. *(She places the trousers*

on the shelf in the closet and comes forward with a coat-hanger.)

MARIANNE—Ah, he wear such beautiful pajamas. When he see a pair he like in zee shop-window, he must have zem—just like an infant. He like zee bright couleur and zee silk stripes—anyzing gay and joli like his musique. (Constance *places his coat on the hanger and carries it to the closet.* Marianne *lifts the remaining garments from the Morris chair and then sits in it.)* Ah, son petite chemise! *(She holds up his undershirt.* Constance *takes it.)* And zee little caleçon! *(She holds up a pair of knee drawers.)* So soft and so silky! *(She presses the drawers tenderly against her cheek and then hands them to the nurse.)* And zee chausette de soie! *(She holds up a pair of socks.)* Ah, if he had known he was go on a trip to zee hospital, he would have wear all zee baby-blue zings from Paris. *(She hands the remaining garments, shirt, tie, collar, etc. to* Constance *who carries them to the dresser and places them in a drawer.)* But zee ambulance come so quick—oh, ce fut terrible. *(She squirms about in the chair.)* Zis chair is so uncomfortable, Mademoiselle.

CONSTANCE—I shall bring this one. *(She carries forward the chair from the alcove.)*

MARIANNE—*(reaching under her and producing his shoes)* It is because I have been sitting on Monsieur Lindenfels's shoes. Oh, such fine expensive shoes! *(She pats them.)*

CONSTANCE—Everything is expensive now, on account of the war. *(She takes the shoes.)*

MARIANNE—Oh! Zee horrible war! You know, Mademoiselle, I am glad after all zat zey had to take his appendix out. Even if it had not been necessaire immediately, I would have persuade Monsieur Lindenfels to undergo zee operation anyhow so he would be in zee hospital on zee Registration Day.

CONSTANCE—*(placing the shoes on the shelf in the closet)* Would he have been eligible?

MARIANNE—He is twenty-seven. (Constance *walks to*

the dresser drawer for her knitting.) When zey draft zee young Americans for France, he would not be exempt. Zey would say a musician can do no good at home, and a German one would only serve as a spy. Non, we make him fight, and let ze German bullet which would kill American boy kill him. (Constance *comes forward and sits on the chair beside* Marianne.) Ah! Mon Dieu! To zink of mon cher Karl lying out in Europe wiz a wound in his side, zee red blood running, running, running until he turn green in zee face. Ugh! Ugh! Mon Dieu! Zere are so many worzless lazy men, Mademoiselle, who would be glad to sacrifice zeir lives on zee battlefield; but to draft zee boys like mon cher Karl who has zee great genius and zee great future—ah! it is outrageous, outrageous!

CONSTANCE—*(knitting)* I do not believe that all men who volunteer are lazy and worthless. While they may not be geniuses, they feel their duty to their country as strongly as the genius feels the creative instinct. There are many things just as important as art.

MARIANNE—Ah, Mademoiselle—she know how to knit.

CONSTANCE—Just a pair of socks.

MARIANNE—Socks! Suck zick wooly socks! If Monsieur Lindenfels had to wear such socks, he could not compose anozer note.

CONSTANCE—Silk socks would not last long if a soldier had to march in them all day.

MARIANNE—Ah, zey are socks for zee soldiers. Mademoiselle is patriotic—eh!

CONSTANCE—In my spare moments I do all I can for the relief and comfort of the men who are fighting at the front.

MARIANNE—Yes; it is nice to serve zee country by knitting, if one cannot serve it by doing greater zings. To fight wiz zee sword and knit wiz zee needle—zey are such ordinaire zings to do. Zee artists are so much supérieure to zee soldiers and zee mozers. Ah, Mademoiselle, zee only

great zing zee mozer can do is to give birth to zee great artist, and zee only great zing zee soldier can fight for and save is zee work of zee great artist. Monsieur Lindenfels—he leave home, parents, everyzing for his art. He wander about zee streets trying to find publisher for his manuscript; but zee publisher accept nozing by an unknown artist. Zee artist must first become known, Mademoiselle; it was I who find Monsieur Lindenfels. I saw in him zee great possibilities. I persuade him write zee kind of music zee public want. I make him populaire. I buy him respectable clothes. I rent him zee little studio and furnish it wiz whatever he want. Zee great artist must have comfort and leisure.

CONSTANCE—But many of the great composers have triumphed in spite of poverty and pain.

MARIANNE—Ah, but it is so absurd to zink such zings are necessaire—to zink zat a masterpiece cannot be produced wizout suffering. If zat were so, Mademoiselle, zee hospital ought to produce many geniuses. But who ever heard of zee great work of art coming out of zee hospital. *(She laughs aloud.)* Zee hospitals are so scientific; everyzing must be measured and timed so accurately; zere is no abandon; everyzing is under restraint; everywhere in zee halls one sees Silence, Silence, Silence. *(She points to various places on the wall of the room where she imagines she sees the signs.)* Zere is no freedom; zee liberty which every artist need is lacking. It is zat what worry me, Mademoiselle; even if Monsieur Lindenfels is out of physical danger, zee ezer and zis environnement may affect his mind—zee memory of what he has been doing; I mean his composing. Zee artist is not ordinaire; non. Zat which is a trifling experience to zee common man may be désastreux to zee genius. Comprenez-vous, Mademoiselle? Je suis superstitieuse. It is such a bad day for zee operation. *(There is thunder.)*

CONSTANCE—When the sun shines this is a most cheerful room.

MARIANNE—*(rising and walking to the large window)*

When zee sun shine? It look as zough zee dear sun will never shine again. *(She returns from the window.)* Ugh, zee grey walls—zey cold grey walls! To gaze at zem morning, noon and night! It must be maddening.

CONSTANCE—They are very restful.

MARIANNE—*(emphatically)* But I have told you Monsieur Lindenfels must not see zee restful zings. I have adorned zee walls of zee studio wiz bright pictures—wiz pictures of zee dancing women—so. *(She whirls about, waving her arms, her bracelets jingling.)* Zee bare dancing women—ah, zat is art. But zee bare grey walls and zee Silence, Silence, Silence—zat ruin art; zat make zee mind blank.

CONSTANCE—A rest from his work may do him good.

MARIANNE—*(dropping into the Morris chair again hopelessly, and then suddenly continuing her lecture)* Ah, Mademoiselle, vous ne comprenez pas. Zee artist is not ordinaire. He need excitement. He need a different kind of nurse to keep him wake. Monsieur Lindenfels—he not sleep much, non, jamais. Try to keep him awake, Mademoiselle, but keep zee door closed so he will not hear zee ozer patients moaning and groaning. *(She pronounces these words descriptively.)* But keep zee windows open so he can hear zee laughing girls on zee street and zee motor cars, and keep zee window shades up so he can see zee sky—if it ever turn blue again, instead of grey. He must see somezing more zan zee grey walls, and he must hear somezing more zan Silence, Silence, Silence. I will send him flowers for inspiration, and Mademoiselle will put zem on zee table, on zee chiffonier, on zee windows, everywhere. He must see zee bright flowers when he wake. *(She rises and walks to the bed.)* Ah, if only he would soon wake, open his eyes and move his arms like when he conduct orchestre! *(She imitates him, waving her arms, her bracelets jingling.)* I suppose it is time for zee rehearsal. *(She looks at the watch in her hand.)* Onze heures moins un quart. I must be at zee theatre at eleven. We are rehearsing Monsieur

Lindenfels's new opera which is to produce next fall. It is called "Zee Great Reliever," Mademoiselle. Ah, it is magnifique, but it is not yet finished. *(She gazes at the bed, shaking her head.)* Non, il n'est pas encore fini. Oh! Je craindre; je craindre. Ah, if only I could stay until he wake, and stay to keep him wake—but I must go. *(She crosses to the dresser and puts on her raincoat.)* I will come often, Mademoiselle, but I must go now. (Constance *rises to take her hand, leaving her knitting on the chair.)* I will stop at zee fleuriste and order zee flowers; I will stop zere on zee way to zee theatre. *(She walks to the window again.)* Ah, zere is Henri wiz zee limousine! *(She comes forward again nervously.)* Remember, Mademoiselle Wakefield; see zat Monsieur get everyzing he desire. Here is my card; have everyzing charged to me—to Marianne Le Grand. I will send his pajamas zis afternoon. Oh, if he had only come out of zee ezer before I leave. He is still green—look so cadavéreux like zee dead soldier wiz a wound in zee side—looks like he has forget his opera—and me. Je craindre; je craindre. Here, Mademoiselle, give him zee watch as soon as he wake and show him my picture. *(She hands her the watch.)* Comprenez-vous?

CONSTANCE—Yes, I will.

MARIANNE—Zank you—and Mademoiselle, could he have private telephone?

CONSTANCE—Yes, he may have one at his bedside.

MARIANNE—Have it put zere at once, so I can call him up when I get to zee theatre. What will zee nombre be?

CONSTANCE—Pavillion B1, Room 13.

MARIANNE—*(jotting it down in the notebook she has taken from her handbag)* Pavillion B1, chambre le treizieme—oh, what an unlucky nombre! Je craindre; je craindre. *(She walks to the door, taking up her umbrella.)* Au revoir, Mademoiselle. Keep Monsieur in zee best of spirits.

(Marianne *leaves.* Constance *opens the watch, examines the picture critically, shakes her head, then places the*

watch under her patient's pillow. An open umbrella is seen bobbing up and down at the window.)

MARIANNE—*(outside)* Mademoiselle Wakefield!

CONSTANCE—*(walking to the window)* Yes, Miss LeGrand.

MARIANNE—Is he wake?

CONSTANCE—Not yet.

MARIANNE—If he wake before I phone, zen you phone to me. My nombre is on zee card.

CONSTANCE—Very well.

(There are three loud honks of an automobile horn, followed by a peaceful silence. Constance *again takes the thermometer from the solution and places it under the patient's tongue. She carries the chair back to its former position in the alcove and places her knitting on the window sill. Then she removes the thermometer and is recording the temperature on the chart just as* Harbison Caldwell *enters the room.*

Caldwell *is a young physician about thirty-five years old, wearing the usual white linen suit of an interne. There is a rosebud on the lapel of his coat, which is unbuttoned disclosing a blue-and-white-striped shirt. He is a man of average height with virile physique, square broad shoulders, high chest, round well-proportioned thighs, luxuriant but not coarse hair trimmed thin about his finely shaped ears and his spotless neck, which, together with a low, loose collar and short coat sleeves, gives him a cool, clean, comfortable appearance. His face is smooth, complexion ruddy, eyes clear, nose prominent, teeth glistening between substantial lips. His hands are plump but firm; his nails, well-defined and immaculate. His light, buoyant step is rendered noiseless by the rubber heels on his white shoes.*

He walks to the far side of the bed to feel the patient's pulse.)

CONSTANCE—*(approaching the foot of the bed)* His temperature is 101, Doctor.

CALDWELL—*(facing the nurse but still holding the patient's hand.)* When he comes out of the anesthetic, I think you will find him quite delirious and probably difficult to manage. Lindenfels is a young composer—artistic temperament, excitable, no self-control. I doubt if you have ever nursed a similar case. If you need help, don't feel reluctant about summoning me.

CONSTANCE—Thank you, Doctor; but I think I shall be able to handle him.

CALDWELL—Lindenfels, above all other patients, must be kept very quiet. He is in poor condition physically—too much wine and liquor, too many cigarettes, extreme sexual dissipation. He has a very low resistance. He must remain in bed at least two weeks. His flesh isn't the healthy kind that heals readily.

CONSTANCE—No venereal disease?

CALDWELL—Yes.

CONSTANCE—I should be careful then?

CALDWELL—Always, Constance; always. *(There is a noticeable silence during which she feels aware of the fact that he is gazing at her, although she herself is looking at the patient. She starts to walk away from the bed.)* You look tired.

CONSTANCE—*(stopping but not turning about)* My last case was a severe one.

CALDWELL—Not enough sleep?

CONSTANCE—Very little, Doctor. *(She walks to the dresser and pretends to be occupied reading the chart.)*

CALDWELL—*(following her)* If Lindenfels is too hard on you, we shall try to find another nurse for night-turn, but the war has made nurses mighty scarce. You need a rest. *(He stands near to her with one elbow on the dresser and one knee on the chair.)* You need not only a good night's rest but several week's rest. *(earnestly)* You need a change, Constance—a big change—a trip somewhere.

CONSTANCE—I have been contemplating a visit home—that is, to as much as there is left of my home. My mother

is dead, and both of my brothers have enlisted.

CALDWELL—I suppose you are proud of them.

CONSTANCE—Could I feel otherwise when my country stands in such urgent need of defenders—when there is no telling at what moment a bomb may drop out of a clear sky on my dear old daddy's head. The defense of our country and of our little cottage, just a mile or two out of London, may cost my brothers their lives. They are two such good, clean boys, Doctor. I don't know that either one of them could ever set the world on fire with his accomplishments, but I do not like to think of their firm healthy bodies bleeding out there under a starless sky without the aid of a physician. *(She walks to the window, takes up her knitting from the sill, but continues to gaze out into the gloomy street.)*

CALDWELL—You are referring to the scarcity of physicians in England—to the report that so many doctors have lost their lives at the front.

CONSTANCE—Yes; that is why she is calling to the young physicians of America to come to the aid of her wounded.

CALDWELL—I noticed that call in the paper a few days ago.

CONSTANCE—Have you given it any thought, Doctor?

CALDWELL—Yes. *(a very noticeable pause)* I had decided *not* to enlist.

(There are soft rolls of thunder like the roaring of distant cannon; the rainfall increases. Neither one of them speak for some time. Constance *walks to the Morris chair, sits down and begins to knit, gazing sadly at her needles. His eyes have followed her, but he has not changed his position.)*

CONSTANCE—Won't you enlist to relieve the American soldiers either, when they go to France, Doctor?

(He walks to the foot of the bed, leans with his back against it, folds his arms and faces her.)

CALDWELL—I suppose you will think me neither a

patriot nor a Christian, but I should like to say a few words before you judge me. In these days few persons have the courage to speak out in public the things that are on their minds, because our Government prohibits it. But here in the seclusion of this room, there is surely nothing to prohibit my views from passing between us. Generally speaking, I cannot see why the United States has entered the war. Many seemingly good reasons have been given I know, but they have all frothed out of a rather hollow incident like toadstools on the trunk of a decayed tree. That incident was the sinking of a ship on which American citizens were warned not to travel. Now, if this is a war for humanity as we are told (the German people being included under that head, as we are likewise told), then I ask which does more for humanity: the ammunition which would shatter the lives of thousands of German fathers and brothers and sons, or the torpedo which sends that ammunition, together with a shipful of death-courting people, to the bottom of the sea? Humanity is humanity, irrespective of nationality, and since we are striving for democracy, number naturally comes before wealth. But we Americans—we who are supposed to be so intensely human and so reasonable a race—we seek to avenge a murder, incidental on the part of the murderer and voluntary on the part of the murdered, by sending half a million of our best young men to France to meet perhaps a similar fate. If Germany had invaded us as she had invaded England, then I should say it were necessary not only for half a million but for all of us to defend our country; but the cold fact is that Germany has not fired a single shot toward our shores and has not molested us elsewhere except in doing what she could not avoid doing in order to destroy not our people but the shells which our people had made to destroy her people—that is, in order to defend herself. Yet we peace-loving Americans, since out country is not in need of defense, must embark for French soil to fight for and defend something; so we have selected the interests of our munition

plants and called it our honor. If Germany has attacked England without cause, then surely, we are attacking Germany likewise. The crafty intellect may invent a score of bombastic reasons to justify our entry into the conflict, but the human heart sends one and only one message throughout the whole constitution, and that is that those of the half million American boys who are going to be wounded or killed are going to be needlessly mangled or murdered. To all physicians the human body, despite its imperfections, its limitations and its ultimate degeneration, is wonderful. To me, in particular, it has always appeared so much so as to win not only my utmost respect but even my undivided reverence. Each time I see this masterpiece of flesh about to be marred by the surgeon's knife, I suffer something more terrible than the pangs of the patient, and it is only the thought that the latter is going to be relieved that prevents me from knocking the knife from the surgeon's hand. I learned my profession, Constance, that I might help preserve these bodies from premature death and that I might bring aid and relief to those unfortunate beings whose wounds, fractures and diseases seem unavoidable. But I tell you plainly that I did not become a physician merely to follow in the path of bloody butchers and barbarians, irrespective of their nationality, to repair, in a reckless and wholesale way, scores of formerly perfect human bodies which have been needlessly exposed to disease and torn by bayonets and poison shells. Now you will understand why I have decided not to go across with the American soldiers.

CONSTANCE—If you do not care to take relief to the soldiers of your own country, it is easy to understand why you had decided not to take it to the soldiers of England.

CALDWELL—You have missed the point of my argument. I would rather take relief to the English soldiers than to the American, because the English soldiers are fighting in self-defense; their wounds are not being unnecessarily inflicted. I tried to make it clear that I consider it my duty and that it is my desire to relieve all suffering unavoidable

on the part of the sufferer.

CONSTANCE—Then why had you decided not to answer the call of England for American physicians? Surely there is more unavoidable suffering among the English soldiers than there is here at this hospital.

CALDWELL—There is another reason which, though it does not concern only myself, does not, on the other hand, obtain in the case of *all* physicians. The open discussion of it seems also to be more or less prohibited, but surely not between two of our profession. The appeal from England shows that the physician at the front runs almost as great a risk of losing his life as the soldier. It is not that I am afraid to die, Constance, but that I am not ready to die. The plain truth is that I have not yet lived—not as I wish to live, whereas most of these soldiers have. But they have not lived as I would live, possibly because they do not know what I know, probably because they do not care. They have had no respect for their bodies. The fact that they have, without thought or without reluctance, exposed and subjected themselves to venereal disease explains why so many of them are willing and even anxious to sacrifice their bodies on the battlefield. This most marvelous function of the flesh is not a thing that I look back upon as dirty, beast-like and ruinous, but a thing which I look forward to as clean, manly and productive. I look forward to it as the sweetest and greatest thing in life, not only because it affords intense yet momentary pleasure, but because of the lasting happiness afforded by its significance and its sequence. I have denied myself this pleasure and happiness because I have been waiting to come by it purely and righteously. To my mind, the greater service is performed not by dying and by killing but by living and by bringing others to life and by keeping them alive and well. That is the main purpose of my profession, Constance. It is a beautiful and altruistic work; and yet I feel that I who am constantly bringing relief and gladness to others should not fail to bring some of it to myself. No other person on this earth has so happily relieved and come

so near to realizing the only essential pains of a pure marriage, without experiencing any of its pleasures and its joys, as myself. Every time I have labored over somebody's loved one helping with the delivery of her babe, I have felt the longing to become a husband and a father. There must be no greater joy in life than that of seeing the product of the loving union of one's own clean flesh with the clean flesh of another.

CONSTANCE—*(dropping her knitting for the first time and gazing off in another direction)* It is also a great joy for me, Doctor, to see these babies smile up into my eyes when I hold them in my arms.

CALDWELL—*(coming forward and taking her hand tenderly in his)* And think how much sweeter and greater the joy if the babe were your own!

CONSTANCE—*(with hidden emotion)* Sweeter perhaps, but selfish; for in that case I would feel I were giving my attention to a part of myself. *(She rises, her knitting falling to the floor.)* But I must not think of myself; not now—now when my brothers are over there, when, like my patient here on the bed, their bodies may be cut or torn apart, but when, unlike my patient, they have no physician to sew and bind their wounds. (Caldwell *drops her hand and walks sadly to the bedside where he stands with bowed head watching the face on the pillow.)* You have helped to save his life, Doctor; if he had a sister, think how much she would love you for having done it!

CALDWELL—*(slowly, his back still turned)* Think how much his sister would love me for having brought relief to her brother?

CONSTANCE—Of course, Mr. Lindenfels has not been wounded in battle.

CALDWELL—*(slowly turning his face toward her)* As your brothers may be . . .

CONSTANCE—Do not think I value the soldier's life above all others; there are men in all walks of life who are fighting for great ends, but the soldier's life, when his cause

is worthy, is surely just as precious as theirs. To me all lives are sacred, and all killing is sin. I believe one can fight nobly without bloodshed. I would that all the munitions in the world were forever sent to the ocean's bottom. I know it is wrong that my country has been drawn into so bloody a whirlpool; everybody knows it. I agree with you in saying it is wrong that your country has been likewise ensnared. But whether it is right or wrong, even though God Himself resents and abhors it, it is here and will be here for some time; and there will be untold suffering which, though it seems beyond prevention, may be in great part relieved. It is not only to my brothers that I would send relief, but to the brothers of all—to all the brothers of England, of France, of America; to all the brothers of Germany as well. We must send relief; if the American physicians do not respond, then I, for one, shall go in their stead. I shall become A Great Reliever, even though I run the risk of losing my own life.

CALDWELL—*(rushing toward her, seizing her hand and falling on both knees)* Constance!

(There is a rap on the door; they do not hear it.)

CONSTANCE—*(sitting in the Morris chair)* I shall never forget the day, the hour, the moment I placed my cool hand on the forehead of my dying mother. So. *(She lays her hand across his forehead; the expression on his face changes immediately from one of suffering to one of relief.)* I shall never forget the light that shone in her eyes,—the same light that is now shining in yours,—and I shall never forget the smile that played on her trembling lips,—the same smile that now trembles on yours,—when, just before closing forever, they murmured: *(Her voice wavers.)* "Constance, your hand is so soothing; you should make it your life's work to relieve the sick and console the dying." *(The tears come to her eyes; she holds her handkerchief to them.)*

CALDWELL—And haven't you been true to your promise ever since? Your mother did not mean that you should risk your life by nursing; she was thinking not of

war but of peace. She was thinking of those whose sickness and death come about unavoidably as did her own.

CONSTANCE—Perhaps so; but I can't believe that she was excluding her own sons from my care, and I know she held equally dear the lives of the thousands of sons, who, with parched lips, are now stretching out their arms for relief.

CALDWELL—*(holding out his arms)* And do those arms mean more to you than these?

CONSTANCE—They are the arms of the suffering and the starving.

CALDWELL—*(passionately)* These too, are the arms of one who suffers and starves—yes, Constance, starves! Why should I not confess it? I am starving—starving for you. *(She rises slowly as though afraid.)* I am starving the big, clean, glowing, throbbing life-force which refuses to die within me. *(He rises from his knees.)* I am starving for that from which my body would shrink as it would from poison were it offered me by any woman other than you. *(He draws her fiercely to him, his arms quivering.)* Constance! nourish me—relieve me!

(There is a second knock at the door; they do not hear it.)

CONSTANCE—Doctor! Doctor! Please let go of me. *(There is a tremor in her voice.)* You are forgetting—forgetting.

(He releases her from his strong embrace and sinks down on his knees again, his arm on the arm of the chair, his face hidden in the sleeve of his coat. She walks to the bedside, places her hand on her patient's forehead, gently pushing back the blonde hair.)

CONSTANCE—A little while ago you told me my patient would have no self-control, and that I should call for your help if I needed it. I can easily understand how one whose flesh is aflame with burning wounds might not be able to control his craving for relief; but a man—a man whose body and mind remain intact—one who has never . . .

(She stops reprimanding him because he has begun to sob very audibly, his broad back convulsing. She is moved;

she approaches him silently and slowly, and places her hand courageously and consolingly on his shoulder. He reaches for it, his face still hidden; then holding it tenderly in his own, he rises gently, turning his face away from hers.)

CALDWELL—Please do not hate me for what I have said or done. If my actions have repelled you— if I have proven myself unmanly and no longer worthy of your presence, you surely will at least pity me—pity me for having made such a fool of myself by revealing my secret so suddenly, so restraintlessly—the secret I have kept locked up here in my heart ever since I have come to know you. But if I am ashamed of the suddenness and the manner in which I have revealed this secret, I should not be ashamed—no, I must not be ashamed *(He suddenly turns his head and looks straight into her eyes, the tears rolling down his cheeks.)* of the secret itself. I would be even a bigger fool to be ashamed of the big desire which has been awakened and aroused in me by so tender and wonderful a woman as you and over which I had, for a moment, lost my control. There's at least this to say in my defense: *You* are differently constituted because you are a woman.

CONSTANCE—*(bravely)* We are not all the cold, passionless creatures we are supposed to be. Convention has decreed that we shall appear very proper. Unlike men, we would run the risk of permanent disgrace were we to dare breathe the fact that similar desires sometimes possess us. We, too, feel a natural attraction toward those of the opposite sex who are clean and strong; we, too, experience a sense of starvation at times. If your revelation has embarrassed you, I shall relieve you by revealing my secret: that I also long gently for the embrace with one whom I, too, have . . .

CALDWELL—*(gradually letting go of her hand)* Oh, then there is some one you love also.

CONSTANCE—As ardently as you love me, Doctor.

CALDWELL—It is queer that this never occurred to me.

I wonder would it be asking too much to know if you have ever revealed this secret to the fortunate one?

CONSTANCE—I never revealed it to him because I knew full well the consequences would be such as, during such times as these, had better be prevented.

CALDWELL—But if your love for him was as ardent as mine for you, Nature would have forced you to reveal it.

CONSTANCE—Nature has *her* way only after we lose *our* self-control; she cannot *force* us to lose our self-control —not if we first *lose ourselves* in others by relieving the suffering which is deeper and more real than our own.

CALDWELL—Deeper and more real? You would have me think of man's sexual desire as a trivial thing?

CONSTANCE—After all, Doctor, it is what his thoughts make of it.

CALDWELL—Of course our thinking of it acts as a stimulus, and forgetting about it tends toward suppression, but nevertheless it is fundamentally and primarily a thing of the flesh. The most intense mental concentration is of no avail to the unfortunate one who is impotent.

CONSTANCE—But the gash made by a saber is also fundamentally a thing of the flesh. Yet one's thoughts cannot so easily shorten that gash or suppress the pain caused thereby; it requires medical aid.

CALDWELL—I understand. You would have me suppress my desire by relieving instead the deeper suffering of your bleeding brothers.

(He walks to the large window, rests his elbows on the sill and covers his eyes with the palms of his hands. Constance *lifts her yarn and needles from the floor, sits in the Morris chair and resumes her knitting. The distant thunder seems a trifle louder. After some time,* Caldwell *comes forward, his eyes filled with tears.)*

CONSTANCE—You have made a decision?

CALDWELL—I have decided that there is this difference between lusting after a woman and loving her: in the first case, a man cares only for the gratification of his own desire;

in the second case, he wants the gratification to be mutual. If mutual gratification is denied him, then his next highest means of attaining happiness is to do all he can to bring about the mutual gratification of the one he loves and the one she loves. Since the suffering of your brothers stands in the way of your desire for love and child, I have decided to help relieve that suffering.

CONSTANCE—*(rising to take his hand)* You are going to enlist?

CALDWELL—Yes; with the Red Cross in France.

CONSTANCE—*(triumphantly)* You will be doing such a wonderfully big unselfish thing. *(She places her knitting on the chair, dries the tears from his eyes with her own handkerchief and, without hesitation, kisses his cheek like a sister.)* Now that I have found some one to serve in my stead,—some one who would not have served otherwise,—I shall return to my dear old daddy in England. *(She claps her hands together suddenly.)* Why there's no reason why we shouldn't sail together on the same ship! Is there?

CALDWELL—It would be a great treat to see you improving day by day, Constance, resting undisturbed in your steamer-chair and drinking in oceans of that invigorating sea-breeze. How the color would come blooming back into your cheeks!

CONSTANCE—And there's another reason why I want you on my ship. I have always felt that this man—this man I love—is just as clean as yourself, but there's nothing like being absolutely certain. You see he will be with us, and I thought you would be sufficiently interested to examine him for me. Of course you will have to approach him in a very delicate way.

CALDWELL—A mere glance will serve as a diagnosis, and, believe me, Constance, if I have the faintest doubt, the approach will not be very delicate. I'll throw him overboard.

CONSTANCE—O Doctor!

CALDWELL—Although I'm not going to be the leading

man on this trip, you can feel assured that the rôle I shall play will not be an insignificant one. I intend to make this fellow dance pretty much the way I whistle. For your sake, Constance. For your sake; not for mine. I don't know that I'll feel very much like whistling, and I'm quite sure that I won't get any pleasure out of seeing *him* dance —in particular, with you.

CONSTANCE—*(taking up her yarn and needles)* We'll see about that when the time comes.

CALDWELL—When will that be?

CONSTANCE—*(walking to the bed)* Just as soon as my patient here has convalesced sufficiently, we will prepare to embark.

CALDWELL—Your patient! You don't mean to tell me that—that Lindenfels is my rival.

CONSTANCE—Now, Doctor! Haven't you already told me about *his* past?

CALDWELL—Indeed I have.

CONSTANCE—Then how could *he* cut you out?—as they say here in America.

CALDWELL—That's right; we've already cut *him* out—in part.

CONSTANCE—Poor Mr. Lindenfels! *(She places her hand on her patient's wrist to take his pulse, while* Caldwell *sits down in the Morris chair.)* Think of the nice long rest you also will get on the way over! The great rest that will precede the greater service.

CALDWELL—And precede the greater rest, too!

CONSTANCE—You are referring to Death? Don't worry, Doctor; you won't be shot. Now you just watch and see if I'm not right about that. *(She walks to the dresser and places her knitting in one of the drawers.)*

CALDWELL—Well, in case, there may be a shell waiting for me, even though I shall never have lived happily, I shall at least have died happy by enabling you to enjoy what to me would have . . .

CONSTANCE—*(coming up behind the chair and strok-*

ing his hair with the palm of her hand) But you shall not have died without having lived happily!

CALDWELL—Do you suppose I could find any real happiness in these diseased women who hang around military camps? A lonely death would be sweeter by far than such a companionship. Yes, Constance, I shall have died without having lived. I could not live happily with any woman other than you, and if I may not live happily and purely, then I do not care to live at all.

CONSTANCE—*(coming forward and sitting on the arm of the chair)* But you will live! You will live!

CALDWELL—You're referring now to that glorious life-after-death stuff that the ministers are pulling over the eyes of the conscripts so they won't see the truth until the truth has, in less than a moment, deprived them of everything—of their own bodies and of the soft tender hands like this *(He reaches for her hand.)* which they have held and pressed so lovingly, of the gentle arms which have encircled their necks, of the lips trembling with happiness which have so often met theirs and promised them a home with its big joys and its little ones—the joys which will all be yours.

CONSTANCE—The joys that will all be mine? *(She rises.)* Do you suppose I could be so selfish a creature as to ask you to sacrifice your own desires only that similar ones of mine might be fulfilled. Selfishness was the one flaw I had observed in *your* character. Your views on the sinking of the *Lusitania* and your views on the real purpose of the medical profession, logical as they were—were they not spoken primarily in order to camouflage your main reason for not enlisting: your selfish longing for me. But now that you have consented to abandon that selfish pleasure (not only with me but with other women, showing how loyally you must love me), and now that in its stead you have decided to do a big impersonal work of service—now—well—well I told you, Doctor, there was one I loved as ardently as you love me, but now *(She sinks down on her*

knees before him.)—now with that selfish flaw eliminated from his character—now *(She places her arms about his neck.)* I love him ever so much the more.

CALDWELL—*(incredulously and motionless)* Then you have been fooling me all the time?

CONSTANCE—It is queer how the truth may be made to take on the color of a lie. That wedding-trip to France is to be *our* wedding-trip: Yours and mine! *(She draws him slightly forward.)* Why don't you respond?

CALDWELL—I—I can't believe it's true; and, furthermore, it's hard for me to forget your attitude toward my first embrace.

CONSTANCE—It wasn't *you* who embraced me then.

CALDWELL—Are you sure it's *me* now? *(He very cautiously places the palms of his hands under her uplifted arms to hold her.)*

CONSTANCE—Yes, Doctor.

CALDWELL—*(kissing her hair)* When I told you I wanted to enjoy the greatest thing in the world, I did not mean that I wanted to enjoy it gluttonously without end. I wanted to feel that I was closer to you than to any other woman. However painful a death may be awaiting me on the field,—but for some reason or other the probability of that death has now vanished,—I assure you that the memory of the voyage preceding it will bring me infinite relief; for life with you, dear, however short, will be oh so sweet! As sweet as—*(He reaches for the rosebud on the lapel of his coat. He observes that she herself has unfastened it with her teeth, holding it between her lips. She takes it in her hand, places it to his nostrils, then to her own, as she sinks to the floor.)* I wanted to give you that rosebud as a symbol—as something which, under your nourishing affection, will swell and open gradually, bloom fragrantly and discharge its fertile seed—a symbol of our love. And when the day which I may never see—the day which will bless you with a little son who will grow up to love and protect you in your dear old daddy's cottage—when that day comes . . .

CONSTANCE—It will be the day of your reincarnation, for his life shall not be mine but the continuation of yours; and because of that, it will be impossible for you to die on the battlefield.

(He kisses her very gently first on one cheek, then on the other, finally taking her tenderly in his arms but gradually increasing the intensity of his embrace and slowly lifting her body up to his own.

An Errand Boy, *in a black rubber coat, enters the room without rapping. He carries four large cardboard boxes under his arm. His coat glistens with rain; the boxes too appear very wet.*

When the Boy *speaks,* Caldwell *and* Constance *separate and rise quickly.)*

BOY—Flowers for Mr. Lindenfels!

CALDWELL—Young fellow, you ought to know better than to enter the private rooms in a hospital without knocking; the persons in them are usually very sick.

BOY—I believe that, sir; but I did knock I don't know how many times, and then I got up nerve enough to come in. It seems I'd been standin' out there over an hour, and I thought if I'd stand much longer the flowers would wilt,—but I guess the weather has saved them.

(Caldwell *leaves the room, the* Boy's *eyes following him suspiciously.)*

CONSTANCE—Just leave the flowers here on the chair.

BOY—*(placing the boxes across the arms of the Morris chair)* Say, Miss; I noticed all them Silence signs out there in the hall, but do you suppose that important guy who just now went back on duty would object to your answerin' a question of mine?

CONSTANCE—*(fastening the rosebud to her uniform)* That would depend on the question. What is it?

BOY—What in the devil has happened to Lindy?

CONSTANCE—Who is Lindy?

BOY—Hully gee! Don't you know Lindy—Lindenfels, the crack composer?

CONSTANCE—Mr. Lindenfels underwent an operation.

BOY—And died?

CONSTANCE—No.

BOY—Then why in the heck are they sendin' him so many flowers? You see I know Lindy pretty well. I've carried many a bouquet from him to the stage door,—but this is the first time the chorus girls has sent posies to Lindy. I thought, maybe, they was fur his funeral.

CONSTANCE—*(laughing)* He will soon be well again. Do you care to see him? Here he is on the bed.

BOY—*(approaching the bed with her)* Hully gee! he sure does look like a stiff; don't he? Have you heard his latest hit?

(Constance *shakes her head indicating: No.)*

BOY—Well, it's a crackerjack! I'd whistle it fur you, if it wasn't fur them signs out in the hall. Music's my religion. That new tune of Lindy's is my mornin' hymn; it goes right to my feet and carries me through my day's work. There are lots of people in this town who couldn't live without Lindy's music. He's sort of a saviour to them, don't you know, so please take good care of him. *(He starts for the door.)*

CONSTANCE—I shall give him all my attention.

BOY—*(with his hand on the doorknob)* I'm not so dead sure of that; the other guy was surely gettin' his share.

(The Boy *leaves, whistling.*

Constance, *smiling, rings the call-bell. Then she opens the upper box of flowers, removing a huge cluster of dark red peonies.* Miss Williams *enters.)*

CONSTANCE—Miss Le Grand asked me to have a private telephone placed at Mr. Lindenfels's bed.

MISS WILLIAMS—I shall get one, Miss Wakefield.

(Miss Williams *leaves. Constance puts the peonies back into the box and places it on the table in the alcove. She opens a second box—a bunch of vivid orange poppies.* Miss Williams *returns with the telephone.)*

CONSTANCE—Will you connect it, please?

(Miss Williams *obeys, placing it on the small table beside the bed. While she is doing so,* Constance *takes the pitcher from the cabinet into the bathroom, and returns with it, filled with water, just as* Miss Williams *is about to leave again.)*

CONSTANCE—Miss Williams, I wonder if you could find a few jars or receptacles of some kind for these flowers.

MISS WILLIAMS—Here are two vases on the dresser.

CONSTANCE—Yes, I know, but I shall need more. There are four boxes of flowers in all.

MISS WILLIAMS—I believe there are some wilted flowers in the sun-parlor; I shall throw them out and bring you the empty jars.

CONSTANCE—Thank you. I would get them myself, but Mr. Lindenfels may come out of the anesthetic any moment now, and Doctor Caldwell does not want him to be left alone.

MISS WILLIAMS—*(leaving)* Yes, Miss Wakefield.

(Constance *pours water from the pitcher into one of the glass vases and arranges the peonies therein, placing the vase in the center of the dresser. She fills the other vase, places the poppies in it and stands them on the large windowsill. She is opening the third box, filled with purple iris, just as* Miss Williams *enters with a large stone jar.)*

CONSTANCE—Set it on the window sill if you don't mind.

MISS WILLIAMS—*(obeying)* These poppies have such a giddy color—and such a rank odor, too! I would never think of sending such things to a sickroom; they're enough to make even a healthy person croak.

CONSTANCE—You could spare only one vase?

MISS WILLIAMS—Yes.

CONSTANCE—Well, I shall have to put two kinds of flowers together.

MISS WILLIAMS—Whatever you do, don't mix any

others in with these poppies; they would sure become infected. *(She comes forward.)* Shall I take the empty boxes with me?

CONSTANCE—Yes; do.

MISS WILLIAMS—*(looking through the box from which the iris has been taken.)* Here is a note.

CONSTANCE—*(taking the note and reading aloud:)* Dear Mademoiselle Wakefield:—Be sure to put the iris in the same vase with the poppies. Signed, Marianne Le Grand.

MISS WILLIAMS—Heavens! What a combination! But it's just like her. You'd better do as she says, however. Lord help the members of her troupe down at The Lyric if they don't do as she commands! I've got a girl friend in the cast; she says when it comes to running the universe, the Kaiser has nothing on Miss Le Grand. Will you need anything else, Miss Wakefield?

CONSTANCE—Not at present, Miss Williams.

MISS WILLIAMS—I hope the weather clears up; it is my afternoon off.

CONSTANCE—It has stopped raining now; I think the sun will come out shortly.

(Miss Williams *leaves with three empty boxes.* Constance *fills the high stone jar with water and places it on the large windowsill, putting both iris and poppies therein. She carries the empty glass vase to the smaller window, folds up the screen which is standing there so that the light falls across the bed. Then she opens the fourth box of flowers—a large bouquet of pink roses. She lifts them to her nostrils to breathe their fragrance. Then she lowers them and takes a longer, deeper breath of the rosebud on her uniform, pressing it to her lips again and again. Finally she carries the bouquet to the smaller windowsill. Just as she reaches the bed,* Lindenfels *stirs and utters a peculiar cry. The telephone rings. At the same moment, the sun, breaking through the clouds, sends a ray of its golden shine across her face and through the roses which she holds to her*

nostrils. She places the flowers on the counterpane over his chest and quickly moistens a small cloth with ice water, pressing it against his parched lips. The telephone rings again. He lifts his arms, at first feebly; then, as his strength returns, he places them about her neck, still uttering the peculiar childish cry, indicating intermingled pain and joy. By this time the sun has come out fully, illuminating her face and flooding the whole room with golden light. From a piano on the other side of the street come the strains of Robert Schumann's "Warum?" The telephone continues to ring unanswered.)

Curtain

ACT II

ACT II.

SCENE—The same as in Act One.

It is late in the afternoon of the third day. There are several unwrapped packages on the dresser. The poppies and iris have been removed from the windowsill. The pink roses have been placed on the little white iron table beside the bed.

Karl Lindenfels *is still lying in bed on the flat of his back. He wears a pair of pale blue pajamas. His beard has grown considerably.*

Constance, *still wearing her rosebud, sits in the alcove knitting peacefully.*

KARL—*(awaking)* Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—*(rising, placing her knitting on the sill)* Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Oh, it vasn't necessary for you to get up. I just vantet to know if you vere here. I can't see you ven you sit ofer t'ere in t'e corner, ant I alvays t'ink I shou't see you efery time I avaken just ass I saw you ven I came out off t'e anest'etic.

CONSTANCE—*(standing on the far side of the bed and placing her hand on his forehead)* You are perspiring. Shall I remove the blanket?

KARL—If you pleace.

(Constance *draws back the counterpane, removes the blanket and straightens the counterpane again.)*

CONSTANCE—*(folding the blanket as she walks to the dresser)* You had a nice little sleep.

KARL—Hat I?

CONSTANCE—Yes; and you needed it. You didn't sleep very much last night; did you?

KARL—I supposse I kept you avake. I trite not too. Ven I vantet vater I reach't for it myself so ass not to tish-

turp you, Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—*(placing the blanket in the dresser drawer)* You must not hesitate to awaken me whenever you wish anything; that's what I am here for. Don't feel reluctant about calling me at any time—in particular, when you are awake.

KARL—T'en I to call you in my shleep?

CONSTANCE—Often, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—*(anxiously)* Ant vat to I say?

CONSTANCE—*(coming forward and leaning over the foot of the bed)* Oh, you say all sorts of things. It's delirium—you don't know what you are saying, so I don't pay any attention to it.

KARL—I supposse I shpeak off t'e t'ings I am treaming apout. I he'rt such vonterful musik in my tream last night; I pelief it vas Schumann's "Warum?"

CONSTANCE—Yes; I heard it also. There is somebody in one of those houses across the street who plays such good music and plays it so well. *(She walks to the large window.)* I believe it comes from the yellow brick building. *(She takes up her knitting from the sill and comes forward to sit in the Morris chair.)*

KARL—Are you font off musik, Miss Vakefielt?

CONSTANCE—Of good music? I love it. I have two brothers: one plays the piano; the other, the violin. I used to sit for hours listening to them playing "Die Lieder ohne Worte" and Schumann's "Warum?" also.

KARL—*(fluently and pensively)* Die Lieder ohne Worte?

CONSTANCE—Genuine music needs no words to convey its significance; does it? Music expresses so many beautiful ideas that seem common-place when one tries to put them in language.

KARL—Musik tuss not alvays exshpress vat is pe'utiful?

CONSTANCE—It does if the composer of it has led a pure life—if his works are naturally inspired and not the dictations of a diseased brain that has been excited by nicotine and wine.

KARL—Putt if impurity ant consciousness off self haff ruin't hiss apility to exshpress pe'utiful iteas musikally, may he not shtill haff pe'utiful t'oughts vich he can exshpress py langwitch ven hiss life iss more unconscious—more shpiritu'l?

CONSTANCE—Perhaps.

KARL—Ven you retire tonight, Miss Vakefielt, vou't you mint putting a pat off paper ant a pencil unter your pillow?

CONSTANCE—Why, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—I vant you to recort vat I say in my shleep. *(There is a noticeable pause.)* Do you supposse I vill shleep tonight?

CONSTANCE—Doctor Caldwell will give you something to induce sleep.

KARL—Toctor Caltvell comes to see me quite often; tussn't he?

CONSTANCE—Yes.

KARL—Tuss he come to see all off hiss patients ass frequently ass he sees me?

CONSTANCE—He has always called on *my* patients very frequently.

KARL—I am so glat I am your patient.

CONSTANCE—You must like Doctor Caldwell.

KARL—Yes; he's such a clean-looking man, and he hass such vonterfully clear eyes. I like to look into t'em; ton't you?

CONSTANCE—Eveybody likes Doctor Caldwell.

(There is a noticeable silence, during which Constance *continues to knit energetically.)*

KARL—Haffn't t'ese roses a vonterful otor, Miss Vakefielt?

CONSTANCE—They are very fragrant.

KARL—V'y ton't you vear vone off t'ese inshte't off t'at stinchy little rosebut?

CONSTANCE—They are all open too far; the petals would fall off. This bud has lasted two days, and it will

last much longer. I put it in fresh water every night.

KARL—I like to shmell t'ese roses at night ven I can't shleep. T'e first night—night pefore last—ven you gafe me t'e hypotermic, it te'ten't my pain, putt I vas shtill avake; ant I vile't avay t'e time py shmelling t'ese roses, taking each vone separately, returning it to t'e fase—ant t'en peginning all ofer again. Vone hass to to somet'ing to pass time. Vonce I push't t'e trinking tupe off t'e taple—py accitent. It fell on t'e tile floor, putt t'e noise tit not avaken you; so I kept on shmelling t'e roses. All night long I t'ought I vas in a rose garten somev'ere among t'e clouts, ant t'e air vas so fragrant, ant t'ere vas musik; t'at same song vitout vorts—Schumann's "Warum?" Ant t'ere vas an ainchel all in vite moofing apout from push to push, pulling t'e roses ant hanting t'em to me vone py vone.

CONSTANCE—That was the effect of the morphine. Now you understand why some persons take it all the time and become fiends. But you have no more pain; have you, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—No continual pain, putt efery vonce in a vile I exshperience t'e sensation off a colt knife plunching into my site.

CONSTANCE—That's due to the ice-cap.

KARL—Putt my site is shtill sore.

CONSTANCE—It will be for some time. But you don't notice the soreness unless you move; do you?

KARL—No; putt I get fery ti'ert lying on vone shpot so long.

CONSTANCE—Shall I relieve the tension in your muscles by placing a pillow under your knees?

KARL—If you pleace, Miss Vakefielt.

(She goes to the dresser, places her knitting on it, opens one of the drawers to obtain the extra pillow, returns to the bed, lifts the covers and pushes the pillow gently under his legs.)

CONSTANCE—Does that feel better?

KARL—Much petter; t'ank you.

CONSTANCE—Would you like a drink of fresh water?

KARL—Not just now, Miss Vakefielt.

(She returns to the dresser, takes up her knitting and then places it down again when she observes the packages.)

CONTANCE—I forgot to tell you that several packages came this afternoon. Do you wish me to open them?

KARL—If you vill.

CONSTANCE—*(unwrapping the first one)* A large box of kisses!

KARL—From whom?

CONSTANCE—*(carrying an envelope to the bed)* This note came with them. *(He opens the envelope and reads while she is returning to the dresser.)* Of course you shouldn't have a kiss just yet; your stomach isn't ready for it.

KARL—I ton't vish any anyhow; Gwentolyn's mout' iss so crooket—in particular, ven she sings. *(He drops the note on the floor.)*

CONSTANCE—And here is a fine box of salted nuts.

KARL—From whom?

CONSTANCE—The card says: Maybelle McConnelle—M-a-y-b-e-double-l-e.

KARL—Yes; Mapel tussn't know how to shpell. T'ey took her into t'e chorus pecausse she iss so goot-looking. I use't to t'ink she vas, putt she really issn't. She hass a nose like a mousetrap ant an ear like a clam.

CONSTANCE—Poor Maybelle! *(She opens the third package.)* And here is a box of big red cherries—and a card.

KARL—Reat it, pleace.

CONSTANCE—*(reading)* Take one every ten minutes, and if you are still lonely for me, then swallow the whole—*(She stops reading suddenly and carries the card to the bed.)* I think you had better read this for yourself.

KARL—Ant if you are shtill lonely for me, t'en shwallow t'e whole tamn pox. Your little hell cat: Taisy Montana.

CONSTANCE—Do you think it is safe for me to open

any more, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Are you afrait you'll fint a pox of bomb-bombs?

CONSTANCE—It's the language I am referring to.

KARL—Oh I see; vell, supposse you reat each cart to yourself first, and if you t'ink it vill shock *me,* ton't reat it out lout. I supposse a sick man ought to haff a censor. Putt Taisy iss really t'e only memper of t'e chorus who shvares real fluently.

CONSTANCE—Here is a basket of fruit "with love from Carmen Caillaux." *(She reads:)* Dear Karl:—Hurry up and get well; without you life is pepless.

KARL—Vitout Carmen life iss pestless.

CONSTANCE—Would you like one of her peaches?

KARL—No; it iss too near meal-time; anyhow her peaches vou't pe ass sour ass Carmen.

CONSTANCE—A box of candy from Violet Remington.

KARL—Poor Fiolet! She hass a foice like a typewriter. How many more packages are t'ere, Miss Vakefielt?

CONSTANCE—Four boxes and three baskets.

KARL—Vell, ton't mint opening any more. Giff t'em to your frients—to t'e nurse who iss caring for t'e olt man vit cancer, to t'e nurse who iss attenting to t'e girl vit a goitre, to t'e nurse who iss vaiting on t'e young voman who vas inchert py her trunken husspant, to t'e nurse who iss vatching ofer t'at chilt who vas porn vit so many teformities on account off her tiseas't vat'er; to all t'ose frients off yours who are nursing all t'ose unfortunate tefils you tolt me apout. Giff my canty to t'em, and t'en Gwentolyn ant Mapel ant Taisy ant Carmen ant Fiolet vill haff ton a goot ting for vonce in t'eir lives.

CONSTANCE—*(throwing the wrapping papers into the wastebasket)* You must have lots of friends, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—T'ey use't to pe my frients, putt now t'ey seem like phantoms, ant I feel like running avay from t'em. I feel ass t'ough I nefer vant to see t'em again. T'eir canty vou't leaf a fery pat taste in my mout'.

(Miss Williams *enters with a tray of food. She carries*

it toward the bed and places it on the small window-sill. After clearing the small table of the telephone, ice-water and roses by placing them on the sill, she places the tray from the sill on the table.)

KARL—To you like canty, Miss Villiams?

MISS WILLIAMS—Passionately, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—T'en take a pox vit you from t'e tresser.

MISS WILLIAMS *(pretending obedience)* We are not allowed to accept presents from the patients. There are the rules on the back of the door.

KARL—I'm not giffing t'e canty avay; I'm t'rowing it avay.

MISS WILLIAMS—Oh, that's different.

(She takes a box of candy from the dresser on the way out, winking at Constance *who is approaching the bed.)*

CONSTANCE—*(taking the napkin from the tray and spreading it across* Karl's *chest)* Doctor Caldwell has allowed you a soft-boiled egg tonight—your first solid food.

KARL—No more prot', T'ank Got!

CONSTANCE—*(opening the egg)* Shall I break up the toast in the egg?

KARL—If you pleace, Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—From what you said, it seems you are tired of consommé.

KARL—It must pe t'at class tupe t'at makes it taste alvays like meticine.

CONSTANCE—Well, after this I shall feed it to you with a spoon.

KARL—Cou't you raice my he't a little higher vit anot'er pillow?

CONSTANCE—Yes; I shall use this one which is under your knees.

(She removes the pillow carefully, shakes it, passes her left arm under his neck, lifts his head and places the pillow under it.)

KARL—T'ank you; t'at's much petter.

CONSTANCE—*(after giving him the first spoonful of*

egg) Does it taste good? *(He nods his head.)* That's right; don't try to speak. You may choke on it, and if you have to cough, it will hurt your side. *(Pause)* Is the egg seasoned enough?

KARL—Yes; let me haff some more quick.

CONSTANCE—*(giving him a second spoonful)* The eggs served here are always nice and fresh.

KARL—T'e finest egg I haff efer tasted!

(Constance *gazes out of the window, and* Karl *gazes up into her face. When she places the third spoonful to his mouth, he is still dreaming.)*

CONSTANCE—Oh, I am so sorry, but you forgot to open your mouth. That's why I spilled the egg all over your chin. *(She uses the napkin.)*

KARL—I neet a shafe; ton't I. My peart is he'fy enough to pore a hole t'rough t'e pillow.

CONSTANCE—I shall have the barber stop in tomorrow morning. *(She gives him a fourth spoonful and then glances out the window again.)*

KARL—I am re'ty for more, Miss Vakefielt.

(As she continues to feed him, Marianne Le Grand *enters dressed in an elaborately beaded gown with hat and shoes to match, carrying a fancy handbag and a bunch of silk flowers of the same shade as her dress.)*

MARIANNE—*(leaving her bag on the Morris chair and approaching the bed)* Bonjour, Monsieur Karl; comment allez-vous?

KARL—Tres bien.

MARIANNE—Ça me fait beaucoup de plasir d'entendre ca. *(to* Constance*)* It is so fine to see him eat again. Soon he will be back to his composing. Let me see what zey feed to mon petit génie. *(She stands on tiptoe to observe the tray on the other side of the bed.)* Des oeufs à la coque, de la rôtie au beurre, du consommé—ah, if only he could have zee lobster and champagne! But soon we will eat an old time dinner togezer.

CONSTANCE—If you wish to have dinner here with

Mr. Lindenfels now, I shall get you a tray.

MARIANNE—Zat would be fine, Mademoiselle; and I shall feed mon cher Karl till you come back. *(She removes her gloves.)*

CONSTANCE—*(leaving)* Very well, if you care to do so—but I shall be back directly.

MARIANNE—*(standing before the tray on the far side of the bed)* Ah! it is great plasir to wait on mon cher Karl. Que préférez-vous? Un peu plus de oeuf?

KARL—Non; consommé.

MARIANNE—And how do you drink zee consommé?

KARL—T'rough t'at tamn class tupe.

MARIANNE—Oh, je comprends. Like zrough zee straw—eh! Ah, zat make you zink of zee Créme de Menthe. I am glad zere is somezing about zee hospital to remind mon cher Karl of zee life he is missing. *(She places the tube to his lips.)*

KARL—*(angrily)* You haff pour't half off it town my neck.

MARIANNE—Pardonez moi. Come; I do better zis time.

KARL—No more. It iss rotten—oh, so rotten!

MARIANNE—I shall have to see. *(She sips some of it.)* Ugh! you are right. It taste like zee dishwater.

KARL—Tishvater! How to you know vat tishvater tastes like ven you haff nefer seen t'e insite off a kitchen? You ton't eefen know how to make tishvater. You ton't know how to make anyt'ing—not eefen a pet. You shou't see Miss Vakefielt make my pet—make it vile I am shtill in it. It iss vonterful!

MARIANNE—*(with jealousy)* Yes. Mademoiselle Wakefield can do such zings—but she cannot sing—like me.

KARL—Perhaps not; putt she makes me fery comfortaple.

MARIANNE—Ah, she make baby of mon cher Karl always feeding him wiz zee spoon. Monsieur should have had man-nurse. *(She walks to the Morris chair, sits on the*

arm of it and swings her foot.)

KARL—A man-nurse? Go vay! A man-nurse vou't hantle me so rough t'at efery time he vou't giff me a trink off vater it vou't open my vount. Miss Vakefielt iss ass gentle ass an ainchel.

MARIANNE—An angel! Oh, I hate angels.

KARL—Off course you to; you luff vicketness—you alvays tit. You hate gootness in any vone.

MARIANNE—Goodness! Ha ha ha . . Goodness! *(She crosses her legs and continues to swing her foot.)* Mademoiselle Wakefield and Monsieur Lindenfels in zis room all alone all night long—Goodness!

KARL—For Got's sake, Marianne, ton't insult Miss Vakefielt by putting her in your class. She iss a voman; not a prima tonna.

MARIANNE—Monsieur!

*(*Constance *enters with another tray. No one speaks. She rests it on the small table in the alcove and then carries the table forward, placing it near the foot of the bed. She also brings forward the small chair, placing it beside the table so that the guest may face the patient.* Marianne *sits down at the table and spreads the napkin across her lap.)*

MARIANNE—*(coldly)* Merci, Mademoiselle.

CONSTANCE—*(lifting the silk flowers from the Morris chair)* Did you wish these placed in water?

MARIANNE—*(sniggering)* Non non, Mademoiselle; you are so stupid. Zey are artificiel—a part of my dress. *(She glances at the flowers on the sill.)* Where are zee poppies and zee iris? Did you not get my note in zee box?

CONSTANCE—Yes, Miss Le Grand.

KARL—I told Miss Vakefielt to put t'e poppies in t'e sun-parlor so t'at t'e ot'er patients coul't see t'e bright colors.

MARIANNE—But, Mon cher Karl, I sent zem to *you*. Zey are . . .

KARL—I t'ought it vou't not hurt to giff a little off your luff to t'e ot'er patients—to olt Mr. Collingvoot, for example,

whose nurse rolls him t'rough t'e hall efery morning past my tore. He has cancer, Marianne—incuraple cancer. He hass peen here for almost t'ree years; in anot'er year t'ey vill put him in a hole in t'e grount. You surely ton't mint if Miss Vakefielt places t'e poppies v'ere t'at poor olt tefil can see t'em.

MARIANNE—Ah, vous ne comprenez pas, Monsieur Karl. I will gladly send some flowers to zis Monsieur Collingwood's room, but zee poppies and zee iris—non. Zey must be where mon cher Karl can see zem. Zey have zee same coleurs as Marianne's costume in zee last act of zee opera when she sing la belle chanson which mon petit génie has not yet finished. Mon cher Karl—he must not forget zee opera. Bring in zee poppies and zee iris, Mademoiselle.

(Constance *leaves the room.)*

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl, you are lose interest in zee opera. You are begin to pity zee sick peoples and zee old man wiz zee cancer who is already half dead. Mon cher Karl must zink of brighter zings, of living peoples, of life, of youth, of laughter, of song, of danse, of musique, of me.

(Constance *returns with the jar of flowers.)*

MARIANNE—See how zee poor poppies are fading and wilting because mon cher Karl will not look at zem. Put zem at zee window beside his bed, Mademoiselle, and take zee pink roses to zee sun-parlor. Let zee poor old man wiz zee nasty cancer have zee nice pink roses.

(Constance *leaves the room with the roses.)*

MARIANNE—So. Now mon petit génie will zink of his opera. Could you not work on zee manuscript, mon cher Karl, if you would sit up in bed?

KARL—I must lie on my pack until t'e sefenth tay.

MARIANNE—Oh, how I hate zee fixed rules of zee hospital. *(She takes up the salt cellar and seasons her lamb chop.)* No meat until zee fifth day. *(She puts down the salt with a bang and takes up the pepper.)* No sit up until zee seventh day. *(She puts down the pepper with a similar bang.)* It is all so absurd. It is well enough for zee man

ordinaire, but zee genius must know no laws. *(She seizes her knife and attacks the chop.)*

KARL—Ton't try to run t'e hospital, Marianne. For Got's sake, shut your mout' ant eat.

(Constance *appears again.)*

CONSTANCE—Do you wish anything more, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—A little plack coffee, pleace.

CONSTANCE—*(going to the tray)* I suppose it's cold by this time.

MARIANNE—Here is my pot, Mademoiselle. I not drink coffee; it ruin zee complexion.

(Constance *takes the little silver pot from* Marianne *and pours some coffee into his cup.)*

KARL—Must I take it t'rough t'at awful tupe, Miss Vakefielt?

CONSTANCE—No, I shall raise your head and then you can drink it from the cup.

(She places her left arm under his neck, lifts his head and places the cup to his lips. Marianne *drops her knife and fork and watches enviously what she mistakes for a display of affection.)*

CONSTANCE—Is it too hot?

KARL—It iss just right—fery, fery goot, Miss Vakefielt. T'at vill be enough; t'ank you.

(Constance *places the cup on the tray, removes the napkin and carries the tray toward the door.)*

CONSTANCE—*(at the door)* I am going for dinner now, Mr. Lindenfels. If you want anything, just ring.

KARL—Ton't forget to take some canty vit you.

(Constance *rests the tray on the dresser, places several boxes of candy upon it while* Marianne *is craning her neck to watch her. The nurse leaves.)*

MARIANNE—Ah, you buy candy for Mademoiselle! Three boxes! Why did you not ask *me* to give you zee coffee? I could put my arm around mon cher Karl's neck just as well as Mademoiselle Wakefield.

KARL—V'y ton't you eat? Your lampchop vill be colt.

MARIANNE—Ah, elle est exquis!

KARL—I can shmell it ofer here—shmell it all t'e petter pecausse I haff not shmell't meat for t'ree tays.

MARIANNE—*(carrying a bite to him on her fork)* Mon cher Karl, zey are starving you. *(She holds the meat to his mouth.)*

KARL—No, Marianne; Toctor Caltvell says I am not allow't to eat meat yet, and if I tit, poor Miss Vakefielt vou't get t'e plame.

MARIANNE—*(walking away from the bed and throwing the fork down on the tray)* I hate Monsieur le docteur; I hate zis Mademoiselle Wakefield; I hate zee whole damn hospital. *(She ties her napkin in a knot and fires it down on the tray.)*

KARL—*(laughing)* Ha ha ha . . *(holding his side)* Ouch! Ha ha ha . . . Ouch! Ha ha ha . . Ouch!

MARIANNE—*(mockingly)* Ha ha ha . . . Ouch! Ha ha ha . . . Ouch!

KARL—Ton't make me laugh, Marianne; it hurts ven I laugh.

MARIANNE—It hurt me too when you laugh. Mon cher Karl no more love Marianne. *(She sinks into the Morris chair, weeping aloud and using her handkerchief—very carefully.)*

KARL—*(holding out his arms to her comically)* Je vous atore! Je vous atore!

MARIANNE—You lie; you make fool of Marianne after she has so much done for you. Oh, zee ingratitude—zee ingratitude! *(She dries her eyes, and uses the powder and mirror from her handbag.)* I sing his songs as no one else could sing zem; I bring him before zee public; I make him famous. Zen he forsake me for zis ordinaire femme de chambre—zis Mademoiselle Wakefield. Any woman could do what she do for you. Zere are five hundred like her in zee city; zeir names are all in zee directory. Five hundred, Monsieur! Five hundred! But zere is only one

Marianne Le Grand who want to make you great man—who want to make whole world worship you. Ah, mon cher Karl, you must forget zis Mademoiselle, zis hospital, zis everyzing. And I have brought somezing zat will make you forget too. *(She produces a bottle of wine from her handbag.)* Zis! Zis! I know Monsieur le docteur not want you drink wine; mais il ne comprend pas. He not know zat you are a great genius who can violate laws and still survive—who must violate all zee rules *to* survive. Zat is why I have smuggled in zee wine; I have already drawn zee cork so zat no one would hear. *(She pours some wine into the cup on her tray.)* Ah, zee good wine! *(She carries it to the far side of the bed.)* Come let Marianne put arms around your neck like nurse; let Marianne lift your head. *(She imitates the nurse's method.)* Come, mon cher Karl, drink a little wine for zee inspiration.

KARL—Marianne you must not tempt me like t'is; you know my appetite for vine; you know how it makes my plutt poil—how it excites me. I neet rest, Marianne. I must not trink; I vill not trink!

MARIANNE—*(rubbing her cheek against his)* Ah, mon cher Karl—mon petit génie—take not much—only one sip—one little sip. *(She places the cup to his lips.)*

KARL—*(pushing the cup away angrily)* I tell you no! Tamn it, no! If I took it, Miss Vakefielt vou't be tishcharg't.

MARIANNE—*(ferociously)* Miss Wakefield! Miss Wakefield! Toujours! Toujours! Toujours! *(She withdraws her arm suddenly, letting his head fall back on the pillow.)* Oh how I *(sarcastically)* love zis Miss Wakefield! *(She returns to the table and fills the cup to the brim.)* I will drink to you, Mademoiselle Wakefield. A votre santé? *(then with vicious contempt)* Non! Non! Non! Not to your health, but to your damnation! *(She drains the cup and then dashes it down on the tray.)* Bonsoir, Monsieur Lindenfels. *(She takes up her flowers and her handbag, struts to the door, then turns suddenly to throw him a kiss.)* Bonsoir!

(She leaves the room. Karl *reaches for the call-bell, rings it three times, pausing long between each ring.* Miss Williams *enters quickly.)*

MISS WILLIAMS—Miss Wakefield is at dinner; she has asked me to answer your calls.

KARL—Pleace take t'ese rotten, foul-shmelling poppies avay. T'row t'em in t'e carbitch can, ant pring me t'e pink roses from t'e sun-parlor.

(Miss Williams *seems to understand. Holding the flowers at arm's length with one hand and holding her nose with the other, she staggers from the room.*

It is gradually growing dark out-of-doors.

Karl *pulls on the light at the head of his bed, then reaches under his pillow for his watch and opens it.)*

KARL—Marianne, you poisonous olt shnake! To t'ink t'at I haff carrie't your picture in my vatch next to my heart! I vant no more to see you. No more! No more! *(He dashes the watch on the tile floor.)*

*(*Miss Williams *enters with the roses.)*

MISS WILLIAMS—Where shall I put them Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Here on t'e taple pesite me, pleace.

MISS WILLIAMS—*(obeying)* Is there anything else I can do for you?

KARL—Yes; pleace remoof t'at tray—ant cover up t'e pottle.

MISS WILLIAMS—*(sternly)* Have you been drinking, sir?

KARL—V'y to you ask?

MISS WILLIAMS—Because Doctor Caldwell forbids you to.

KARL—Vell, you're not going to tell him; are you?

MISS WILLIAMS—*(holding the tray over her shoulder)* I am supposed to.

KARL—You are also supposse't not to take canty. Pleace take ano'ter pox on t'e vay out.

(She walks to the dresser, puts a box of candy on the

tray and then leaves the room—almost colliding with Tony *as he enters. He waves his hand after her and throws her a few kisses as she marches down the hall.* Tony *has a violin-case in his hand and a small package under his arm. He is a handsome Italian with devilish eyes, red cheeks and lips, and a black mustache. He wears a soft green felt hat at a rakish angle, and does not remove it—for he is a reckless musician absolutely devoid of manners. He deposits his case and package on the Morris chair and rushes to the bed, falling across it.)*

TONY—Oh, Mista Carlo! Mista Carlo! Me glad! Me glad!

KARL—Ouch!

TONY—Oh, me for-ged; me for-ged. When dey tella me dey cuda you open, me sleepa nod a wink; and when me playa da violin, tremolo. . . tremolo . . tremolo. Bud now you live again, and Tony play again. *(He opens his violin-case and takes out the instrument and the bow.)* Yes. Listen, Mista Carlo; Tony—he play again. *(He draws the bow across the strings, producing beautiful legato strains.)*

KARL—Yes, Tony; I can hear t'at you are petter again.

TONY—Bud Mista Carlo—he nod yed bedder. Da eyes—dey looga far bag; and he needa da shave.

KARL—T'e parper's coming to-morrow.

TONY—Den Mista Carlo looga nize. *(He pinches* Karl's *cheeks affectionately.)* Den Mista Carlo looga like selve. Now Mista Carlo looga like—like—

KARL—Like hell?

TONY—No; he looga more like Chrized.

KARL—I haffn't suffer't so much ass t'at, Tony.

TONY—Tella me: when dey stiga da knive in da bell, mucha pain?

KARL—You ton't feel any off it, Tony.

TONY—Nod till you wega up?

KARL—T'e vaking up! T'at iss vonterful; t'at iss t'e

crantest t'ing I haff efer exshperience't. Sit town, Tony; I vill tell you apout it. *(Tony perches on the near side of the bed. The room is almost dark now save for the light from the reading-lamp, which falls only on the pillows and the counterpane.)* You seem to pe up among t'e clouts, ant you hear sveet musik. Play somet'ing, Tony: play some Schumann. (Tony *places the violin under his chin and, by chance, starts and continues the "Warum?" with much feeling and expression.)* T'ere iss a haze—a golten mist pefore your eyes, and t'rough t'e mist you pegin to see a lot off pink roses; ant t'e roses open viter ant viter ant pecome pinker ant pinker—ant among t'em you gratually see an ainchel. An ainchel, Tony! An ainchel—all in vite. Oh, such a luffly ainchel vit such luffly eyes! Ant she pents ofer you ant kisses your lips vit cool vater.

TONY—*(stopping the music abruptly)* Wid cool wader? No; me like-a da wine on da angel lip!

KARL—No, Tony; t'ere iss no vine to make your plutt hot. Your lips are alre'ty hot, ant t'e ainchel kisses t'em vit cool vater. Ant oh, how she reliefs you!

TONY—*(jumping from the bed)* No. Mista Carlo— he dream; dis nod real.

KARL—It iss real, Tony. See here are t'e roses. Come ant shmell t'em. How fine! *(He reaches over and lifts the roses from the table.)*

TONY—Me nod like-a smell roses; me like-a smell niza cigar. *(He places his violin on the chair and opens the package.)* Me bringa Mista Carlo niza box cigars.

KARL—I am not allow't to shmoke, Tony. *(He returns the roses.)*

TONY—*(opening the box and offering it)* Mista Carlo smoke-a one—jusda one wid Tony.

KARL—No, Tony; t'e ainchel tussn't vant me to shmoke.

TONY—*(exasperated)* Dis angel mega me sick. Dis angel nod like-a cigaredd like-a Carmen, like-a Daisy, like-a Maybelle, like-a Gwendolyn—eh, Mista Carlo? *(He pokes his finger playfully into* Karl's *ribs.)*

KARL—Ouch!

TONY—Oh, me for-ged; me for-ged. *(He takes a cigar from the box and returns the box to the chair. He strikes a match on his trousers and lights his cigar.)*

KARL—Taisy ant Mapel—t'ey are not'ing compar't to t'is ainchel.

TONY—Where is dis angel? Me looga for dis angel. *(With his match still burning, he gets down on his knees and crawls part way under the bed.)* Whad dis? *(He pulls the cot out part way.)*

KARL—T'at's t'e ainchel's pet.

TONY—Whad? Dis angel crawla between here to sleep?

KARL—No; she pulls it out first.

TONY—Oh! *(He finds the watch.)* Looga, Mista Carlo; me finda dis angel's alarm clog. See! here is da angel's pigdure inside.

KARL—No, Tony; t'at's t'e tevil's picture.

TONY—*(holding the picture in the light)* Dis Marianne Le Grand.

KARL—Yes; you giff her t'e vatch tonight at rehearsal. Tell her I sent it to her; tell her it von't go no more.

TONY—You wanda Marianne to fixa wadge?

KARL—She can't haff it mentet; it iss proken for efer—for efer.

TONY—*(rising quickly from his knees)* Whad! Mista Carlo—he no more love-a Marianne?

KARL—I nefer tit luff Marianne. I nefer knew vat luff vas until I saw t'e ainchel—t'e ainchel who kiss't my lips vit cool vater.

TONY—*(laughing)* Oh, Mista Carlo—he soon wega up; he nod love-a dis angel long—angel and cool wader and Schumann. He soon wanda Marianne again and Carmen and Maybelle; he soon wanda real woman—woman and wine. And Mista Carlo will sing again whad he singa always: *(playing his accompaniment, holding bow and cigar in the same hand)*

"Wer liebt nicht Weib, Wein und Gesang,
Er bleibt ein Narr sein Leben lang."

KARL—No, Tony; I am t'rough vit girls who haff vine ant rootch on t'eir lips ant vildfire in t'eir feins ant eyes. I haff seen t'e ainchel now, ant I luff her. *(He repeats it with an emotional tremor.)* I luff her; Ich liebe wie ich noch nie geliebt! T'ere's such a kint soft, pe'utiful light in her eyes—Liebeslicht! Ant her hant makes me feel so goot ven she touches my forehe't. I am so happy ven she iss near me, Tony, I fint it hart to shpeak. T'at's real luff, Tony: ven a man iss afrait to tell a voman how much he atores her—ven he hass to pretent he iss ashleep pefore he hass t'e courritch to shpeak vat iss on hiss heart.

TONY—*(walking away from the bed, shaking his head)* Mista Carlo—he mucha sick; mucha sick.

KARL—*(more forcibly)* Oh, I know vat lust iss, Tony; I know vat you enchoy ant pelief in: Sitting up late at night ofer your vine pottles, trinking to t'e purning eyes across t'e taple—trinking until your he't feels pig ant varm—until your whole poty feels pig ant varm—ant t'en emptying yourself out again ant again until you are vorn out ant veak—until t'e last trop of fitality hass peen shot out off your system. *(He shakes his head.)* No more off t'at for me, Tony. I vill haff not'ing more to to vit vimmen who haff not'ing putt poties. I vant a voman vit a soul—like t'e ainchel.

TONY—Mista Carlo—he become saind; me said he looga like Chrized. Mista Carlo musd geda shave quig and come-a bag to Marianne, to Maybelle, to Daisy. Herr Schmedderling—he nod condugd like Mista Carlo—no abandono—no pep! Maybelle, Carmen, Gwendolyn—nod able to dance: Miss Le Grand nod able to sing; orchesdra nod able to play. Mista Carlo nod condugd rehearsal, den rehearsal go-a rotten—rotten—rotten.

KARL—I vill nefer return again, Tony. I am going to giff up t'at life ant liff a new vone.

TONY—*(with vehemence)* No, no, no, Mista Carlo; no

no, no. *(He paces the floor, scratching furiously on his violin.)*

KARL—*(with determination)* Yes, yes, yes, Mister Tony; yes, yes, yes. Tell Marianne, tell Schmetterling, tell Guilbert, tell all of t'em I nefer vant to see t'em again. Nefer!

TONY—You tawga nonsense. *(He approaches the bed with a leap and thrusts his bow into Karl's side as though it were a poinard.)* God damn it! Weg up!

KARL—Ouch! Ouch!

TONY—*(scratching his head)* Oh, me for-ged; me for-ged. But Mista Carlo—he noda ride in da head; he tawga like sick monkey. No smoke! No Wine! No Maybelle! He no more man. Dis angel—she mega angel of Mista Carlo too.

KARL—She hass made a new man off him, Tony—t'e kint of man a pure voman hass alvays peen villing to liff vit putt nefer aple to fint. A fellow hass got to cut out more t'an hiss appentix if he vishes to afoit pain ant misery; he hass got to cut out t'e hapits t'at ruin hiss mint ant poty; he hass got to come to voman ass pure ant untaintet ass t'e ainchel hass come to me.

TONY—*(throwing his violin into the case)* Dis angel—she mega Mista Carlo crazy in da nud. *(He snatches up the violin-case.)* Gooda nide; me lade for overture. Me wisha dis angel in hell!

KARL—She iss in hell, Tony; she iss here in t'is hospital vich iss fill't vit croaning sinners ant innocent vimmen ant chiltern who are t'e consequences off intemperance ant proshtitution. She iss an ainchel in hell, Tony, trying to trife out t'e tefil ant pring relief to t'ose whom he hass lure't into hiss vays.

(Tony *rushes to the door and finds himself face to face with* Constance, *who has just opened it. She remains standing on the threshold, the light from the hall falling on her white uniform and causing it to stand out brightly in contrast with the darkness of the room.* Tony, *for the first time since his entrance, removes his hat and passes her with bowed head.* Constance *enters*

the room and closes the door softly. She lights the bracket-lamp between the door and the dresser.)

CONSTANCE—Another friend of yours, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Yes; vone off t'e players in t'e orchestra.

CONSTANCE—*(carrying the small chair back to its place in the alcove)* You have had lots of visitors and presents this afternoon.

KARL—Tit you giff t'e canty to t'e nurses?

CONSTANCE—Oh, yes; while they were at dinner. They all asked me to thank you ever so much, and they all wish you a speedy recovery.

KARL—Got pless t'em.

CONSTANCE—*(carrying the small table back to its place in the alcove)* Aren't you tired after having so much company?

KARL—Yes; vat time iss it?

CONSTANCE—Has your watch stopped?

KARL—It fell on t'e floor ant proke.

CONSTANCE—Ah.

KARL—I gafe it to Tony.

CONSTANCE—And he will have it all fixed up. Well, its almost bedtime. See. *(She holds her hand under his light that he might use the watch on her wrist.)*

KARL—It is alvays pet-time vit me.

CONSTANCE—That's true; I should have said sleep-time. I shall try to make you very comfortable so that you will have a good night's rest.

(She removes the ice-water, glass tube and telephone from the windowsill, placing them on the white iron table with the roses. She unfolds the screen before the window. Then she walks around the foot of the bed to the little cabinet, takes the metal pitcher from it and carries it into the bathroom. She turns on the lamp in the bathroom; a patch of light falls on the wall in Karl's *room. One can hear the water running from the faucet into the pitcher. She returns with the pitcher and with*

washcloth, soap and towel, placing them on the cabinet and drawing the cabinet closer to the bed. She pours some water into the bowl and, standing on the near side of the bed, washes and dries his face and hands in silence.)

CONSTANCE—Does that feel better now, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Much petter; t'ank you.

CONSTANCE—Isn't your back tired and hot from lying so long?

KARL—Yes; it iss.

CONSTANCE—I shall rub it with alcohol to harden and cool the skin.

(She carefully removes his left arm from the coat of his pajamas and then helps him to turn over slowly on his right side. The light from the reading-lamp shines down on his bare frail back. She takes a bottle from the inside of the cabinet, pours some of the contents into the palm of her hand and rubs well his shoulders and his spine. She smooths the wrinkles out of the sheet and helps him place his arm back in the sleeve.)

CONSTANCE—Now turn slowly. *(He does so.)* It's much cooler this evening. Shall I put the blanket on?

KARL—Pleace.

(She walks to the dresser and gets the blanket from the drawer; she also brings the thermometer with her. She places the latter under his tongue. Then she turns back the counterpane, straightens out the upper sheet, puts on the blanket and spreads the counterpane over it. She takes his pulse, then removes the thermometer from his mouth, observing the reading.)

CONSTANCE—*(walking to the dresser to record her observation)* Your pulse and temperature are normal tonight. *(She returns to the bed.)* Shall I remove the extra pillow?

KARL—Pleace.

(As usual she places her arm behind his neck, lifts his

head, removes both pillows, lowers his head gently, shakes one of the pillows and places it under his head again.)

KARL—T'ank you.

CONSTANCE—*(carrying the extra pillow to the dresser drawer)* You ought to sleep well tonight. Doctor Caldwell will be here any moment with the capsules.

(She moves the cabinet back to its correct position against the wall, pulls the cot out from under the bed so that it is separated from it by a distance of about two feet. She turns back the white counterpane on the cot, then walks to the dresser, takes the chart and a pencil, returns to the cot and places them under her pillow.)

CONSTANCE—You see, Mr. Lindenfels, I am prepared to record what you say in your sleep. *(There is a rap on the door.)* Come in.

*(*Caldwell *enters with his medicine case.)*

CALDWELL—Well, how is my patient tonight?

CONSTANCE—He is ready to take the capsules, Doctor. I shall get him a glass of hot milk,—and while I am out I might as well get you a pitcher of fresh water, Mr. Lindenfels. *(She goes to the far side of the bed to get the glass pitcher from the table.)* Is your ice-cap still cold?

KARL—No.

CONSTANCE—I'll refill that also. *(She reaches for the cap under the covers, removes the cloth which is wrapped about it, places the cloth on the foot of the bed and then leaves with the cap and the pitcher.)*

KARL—V'y iss it I ton't shleep, Toctor?

CALDWELL—*(sitting down amicably on the side of the cot nearest the bed)* I suppose it's due to the general shock which the operation has given to your whole system.

KARL—You are certain it iss tue to t'at?

CALDWELL—I don't know what else it could be unless you are worrying about being drafted into the army. Tomorrow is Registration Day, you know.

KARL—To tell you t'e trut', Toctor, I hat forgotten all

apout t'e war. Are you going to enlist?

CALDWELL—I have already registered with The Red Cross.

KARL—I supposse t'ey vill neet lots of physicians, putt t'ey surely cou'tn't giff each vountet soltier ass much attention ass you are giffing me?

CALDWELL—I suppose most attention is given where there is chance of a speedy recovery. If a soldier has received a very large and serious injury, he would be of no further use as a fighter.

KARL—Ant vat vou't t'ey to vit him?

CALDWELL—It's a question. Unless he had a close friend to hunt him out, he might be left behind to die.

KARL—T'at issn't a fery pleasant t'ought—iss it?—unless vone peliefs in life after te'th. I supposse you t'ink it nonsense to pelief t'at, Toctor?

CALDWELL—I could never believe it, Lindenfels, even if I wanted to. Of course a man's influence on others often lives after the man himself has died, and they will continue to think and speak of him as though he were still alive; but as to the man's own consciousness as to what the living are still saying and doing—that is all bosh. Now understand that while this is my view I have no desire to impose it on others. If, for example, it makes a mother happier to believe that her son, killed outright in battle and buried in France, is still living, breathing, walking, clasping her hand, why should any one try to dispel the illusion and make her miserable by preaching that the boy is teetotally dead—dead as a door nail—gone forever and forever. Amen.

KARL—I use't to t'ink so too, Toctor; but now I t'ink tifferently.

CALDWELL—Maybe you would like to convert me?

KARL—Vell, you see ven I hat my acute attack of appenticitus, t'e effect vas t'e same ass t'ough I hat peen shtruck vit a shell. *(He snaps his fingers.)* T'at quick eferyt'ing grew plack pefore me, ant I fell town like te't. Ant titn't I remain unconscious? Vasn't I ass goot ass te't vile I

vas unter t'e influence off et'er? Ant, my Got, haff I not vaken't up into a new life t'at iss certainly he'fenly compar't to the vone I vas liffing on eart'?

CALDWELL—But to be under the influence of the anesthetic is not the unconsciousness of death. Your heart continues to beat and you still breathe. In other words, you are still alive.

KARL—Yes; putt it iss tifferent from ortinary life.

CALDWELL—It is the same as the unconsciousness of sleep.

KARL—No, Toctor; it iss fery tifferent from shleep: Ven I am ashleep I vake up tamn quick if somevone shticks a knife in my pelly.

CALDWELL—That's true; it *is* different from sleep.

KARL—I tell you it iss a shtate petween t'e life vich preceets te'th ant t'e life vich follows it. It is like t'e vone pecausse my heart shtill peats, ant it iss like t'e ot'er pecausse it iss impossiple to causse me any physical pain eefen t'ough you cut me to pieces.

CALDWELL—Yes; that's true. Go on.

KARL—Now you say t'at ven a man iss te't, he tuss not hear vat ot'ers are saying apout him.

CALDWELL—No; of course not. He is deprived of *all* his senses—not only feeling.

KARL—Yet ven I vas in t'at te't contition—te't in t'at I cou't feel no physical pain—I he'rt some t'ings I vas not supposse't to hear.

CALDWELL—Impossible. What did you hear? See if I can verify it. I remember everything that was said over the operating table.

KARL—I ton't recall just vat I he'rt; I just recall haffing he'rt somet'ng. I recall haffing he'rt *your* foice, alt'ough I cou't not see you.

CALDWELL—You just imagine now that you actually heard me then.

KARL—Later I may pe aple to tell you not t'e exact vorts putt t'e t'ing you vere talking apout. T'en you vill

pelief me. But t'ere's anot'er t'ing, Toctor: Now t'at I am out of t'e anest'etic, my life iss more like life after te'th t'an life pefore te'th.

CALDWELL—In what way?

KARL—I am shtill liffing alt'ough I haff lost a part off my poty—my appentix. Issn't t'at t'e peginning of shpirituality?

CALDWELL—The appendix is not important; it has no office whatever.

KARL—T'at may pe true enough, putt it iss a first shtep; ant you know t'at a man can liff ven more important organs t'an his appentix are remoof't?

CALDWELL—Yes; he can live without teeth, without eyes, with only a part of his intestines, with only one lung or one kidney; and he can live without his sexual organs.

KARL—Vitout hiss sexual orkans? Issn't t'at vonterful?

CALDWELL—But you must not forget that it is a most abnormal, unsatisfactory, miserable way of living; and you must remember that there are limitations here also; there are certain organs without which one cannot even live abnormally and miserably—without which one must inevitably die.

KARL—I am not so shure off t'at, Toctor. Ass a result my own exshperience ant off vat you haff tolt me, I pelief t'e tay vill come ven I can t'row avay efery part of t'is whole peastly, tissipatet ant tiseas't poty off mine ant shtill liff—liff vitout t'inking off tisease—liff vitout t'inking off sex—liff in shpirit alone. By Got, Toctor, I pelief it vit all my heart ant soul.

CALDWELL—With all your heart? *(He laughs.)* You still need your heart in order to believe it. Well, Lindenfels, if you care to think in that way, I won't encourage you any more than I would encourage that unfortunate mother to think otherwise.

KARL—Tell me, Toctor; are you ass happy now ass you efer exshpect to pe?

CALDWELL—I can't say that I am; but I hope to reach

that state before and not after death.

KARL—Ven?

CALDWELL—When I am a married man.

KARL—You mean to infer t'at marritch vill pring you a pleasure vich you haff nefer pefore exshperienced?

CALDWELL—Exactly, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—You are vone in a t'ousant!

CALDWELL—My religion is morality. I don't see why any one should desire life after death unless one has made a botch of the life which precedes it. An immoral, diseased man, for example, may want a second chance to live righteously without a body after he has discovered that he can't do so and still possess one. But to a moral man, the temptations of the flesh enrich existence: for the sorrow through resistance and the joy in anticipation are the very elements that make his life sweet. To have an untainted body and to know that the functions of its organs shall ultimately be purely and properly discharged in union with another—this, to me, is the acme of happiness. I desire no further happiness in anything so chimerical as the spirit.

KARL—Off course you vill vant no ot'er man to haff luff't your vife pefore you marry her?

CALDWELL—Love her in the flesh? Decidedly not, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Putt in shpirit?

CALDWELL—Just what do you mean by that?

KARL—Vell; supposse your vife vou't tie. Vou't you shtill opject to anot'er man luffing her t'en?

CALDWELL—How could I? If by loving a woman you mean simply *thinking* how lovely she is, well—how could any one prevent that in any man and why would any one want to prevent it—in particular, if the woman were dead—when divorce would no longer be possible?

KARL—If you t'ink it iss impossiple to tiforce t'e shpirit off a voman from t'e poty off a man, t'en surely it iss more impossiple to tiforce two shpirits—t'e shpirit off a voman from t'e shpirit off t'e man who luffs it. I am assuming now

t'at t'e man who luffs your vife iss, ass you say, also t'et.

CALDWELL—*(rising)* Lindenfels, to me this is all tommyrot and insanity, but let me tell you for a third time that I will discourage no man from the belief that Spirituality is The Great Reliever. If a man who hasn't found the right mate in the flesh is relieved by the belief that he shall do so in the spirit,—whatever that may mean,—I am perfectly willing to let him believe so—even if he has an eye on the spirit of the woman who is to become my own wife.

KARL—You vill shake hants on t'at, Toctor?

CALDWELL—*(reaching for* Karl's *extended hand and pressing it firmly)* Yes, if it will help to make you feel better. *(then anxious to change the subject of conversation)* What wonderful roses you have over there!

KARL—Yes; I must tell you apout t'ose roses, Toctor. Ven I came out off t'e anest'etic t'e first t'ing I saw vas. . .

(Constance *enters.)*

CALDWELL—Now let me see; you wanted something to make you sleep tonight; didn't you?

KARL—Yes, Toctor.

CALDWELL—Well, I shall leave two capsules with Miss Wakefield.

(Constance *places the ice-cap, the hot milk and the ice-water on the dresser to take the medicine which the doctor holds out as he approaches her.)*

CALDWELL—May I see Mr. Lindenfels's chart?

CONSTANCE—*(first glancing over the articles on the dresser)* Oh yes; I had forgotten. I have placed it under my pillow. *(She walks to the cot to get it.)*

CALDWELL—That's a new place for it.

CONSTANCE—Well you see, Doctor, Mr. Lindenfels is accustomed to talking in his sleep, and he asked me to record what he might say tonight. I thought I would keep the chart handy and write on the back of it.

CALDWELL—Oh, I understand.

(She hands him the chart. He sits under the light near the door to read it. She carries the capsules and the

hot milk to the far side of the bed, holds up her patient's head with her left arm, as usual, and gives him the medicine. Caldwell, *although pretending to read, watches her. She returns to the dresser for the ice-cap and the water-pitcher to find him still reading the chart with unusual interest, it seems. She walks back to the bed, places the water on the table, wraps the cloth about the ice-cap and places it over her patient's incision.)*

CONSTANCE—Will you have a sip of cool water, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Pleace.

(She pours out some water and gives it to him through the tube. Caldwell *rises and approaches the bed to hand her the chart.)*

CALDWELL—Good night.

KARL—Goot night, Toctor.

(Caldwell *turns about and walks slowly to the door.* Constance *places the chart under her pillow. He passes out into the hall, closing the door very slowly and reluctantly behind him. She extinguishes the bracket-lamp at the dresser, returns to the bed, takes the towel, cloth and bowl from the cabinet into the bathroom, closing the door behind her and thus causing the patch of light to disappear on the wall.*

A short silence.

Karl *extinguishes the reading-lamp on his bed by pulling the small chain. Aside from the moon shining faintly through the windows, the room is now very dark. Another silence. The clock in the church-steeple announces the hour slowly: nine strokes with seemingly long intervals between them. Another silence. The curtains sway back and forth in the moonlight and the breeze, which blows in through the windows bearing the strains of Schumann's "Warum?" from the piano across the street. The song without words ends. Another silence. The drinking tube falls to the tile floor. Another silence. The chain of the lamp over the bed is pulled to the first*

notch, producing an almost imperceptible glow on the counterpane; in a short while it is extinguished again. The lamp is one which is capable of emitting four different intensities of light. The chain is pulled again to the first notch. Pause. Then to the second notch. Pause. Then the light is completely extinguished again. Pause. First notch. Pause. Second notch. Pause. Third notch. Then complete extinction. Pause. First notch. Pause. Second notch. Pause. Third notch. Pause. Fourth notch. Lindenfels *is then plainly visible, as is also* Constance, *who lies sleeping on the cot in a dark blue kimono, partly covered by the counterpane. Her face is turned away from the bed. He turns over slowly and carefully on his right side and reaches out his arms to her in silence. Then he turns back again and extinguishes the lamp.*

There is another silence.)

KARL—*(softly)* Miss Vakefielt.

(No response.)

KARL—*(not quite so softly as before)* Miss Vakefielt.

(No response.)

KARL—*(very distinctly)* Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—*(sleepily)* Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

(One can hear her rising from the cot. She lights the lamp over his bed. He continues to call, his eyes closed. She decides he is talking in his sleep. She gets the chart from under her pillow, prepares to write as she sits on the edge of the cot with a braid of hair hanging down either side of her neck.)

KARL—Miss Vakefielt. I—I—I—vant—I vant to tell you—t'at—t'at you haff chainch't t'e course off my life—chainch't it from eefil to goot—ant I vish you to know t'at I—I—luff you. *(The curtain is descending slowly.)* I luff you for toing it—luff you—luff you vit all my soul.

ACT III

ACT III.

SCENE—The same as in Act I.
The next morning; bright, sunshiny; about 10:30.
The vase on the dresser which contained the peonies is empty. The pink roses, somewhat faded and wilted, are still on the table beside the bed. The screen has been removed from the smaller window, and the baskets of fruit and boxes of candy and cigars have all been placed on the window-sill near the patient.
Lindenfels *has had his bath and his shave and is, as usual, lying in bed.*
Constance, *as usual, is knitting as she sits in the Morris chair.*

KARL—Miss Vakefielt, vat iss it you are alvays knitting?

CONSTANCE—Socks, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Putt such he'fy voolen-looking vones!

CONSTANCE—Well, fancy silk ones wouldn't last if a soldier had to march in them all day long.

KARL—Oh, you are knitting socks for soldiers?

CONSTANCE—Yes; didn't you hear the church bells ringing and the cannons booming this morning?

KARL—Toctor Caltvell remintet me last night t'at t'is vas Registration Tay. He t'ought t'at vas t'e reasson v'y I vas not aple to shleep; he t'ought I vas afrait to go to t'e front ant tie, Miss Vakefielt. Putt ven I t'ink off t'e tissolute life I haff let, I t'ink t'e pattlefielt vou't pe a fine place to ent it—ant shtart a new vone. I vou't not haff to tisgrace my name py committing suicite; I vou't honor it py tying like a hero, and I vou't also pe making a hero off t'e man who vou't shoot me. No, Miss Vakefielt, I vou'tn't vant to kill any vone putt I vou'tn't mint in t'e least if somevone vou't kill me—or if I shou't kill myself. I am not a cowart; I am not afrait to tie like some men. No; it iss not t'e t'ought

off tying t'at keeps me from shleeping.

CONSTANCE—That keeps you from sleeping? Why you slept very soundly last night; you even snored a little.

KARL—Tit my shnoring vaken you? I am so sorry. Putt are you shure I vas shnoring? Perhaps I vas talking in my shleep.

CONSTANCE—No; you didn't speak a word in your sleep all night long.

KARL—Honestly, Miss Vakefielt; titn't I?

CONSTANCE—No, Mr. Lindenfels—none that I heard.

KARL—*(thoughtlessly)* I t'ought I saw you get up vonce ant write somet'ing on t'e chart?

CONSTANCE—And the fact that you saw me proves that you were awake at the time. You asked me to record what you said in your sleep—not what you said while you were awake.

(Karl *is silent;* Constance *continues to knit.)*

KARL—T'en you t'ink I am not sincere; you t'ink my intention in toing t'is vas a pase vone.

CONSTANCE—Whatever it was, you hadn't the courage to tell me openly.

KARL—I know I hatn't. How cou't any man vit a past like mine haff t'e courritch to look into eyes ass pure ass yours ant tell you t'at he luff't you. Putt now t'at I haff tolt you t'at vit half-close't eyes, it iss easier to repeat it vit open't vones. *(emphatically)* Ant vet'er you pelief me or not, I to atore you, Miss Vakefielt—I luff you vit all my soul for t'e kintness you haff shown tovart me. I supposse you vill shtill t'ink t'at I am lying; you vill t'ink my interest in you iss no teeper t'an my interest in t'e paintet freaks who haff sent me t'eir pitter sveets. You t'ink it vou't pe impossiple for me efer to pecome cleanly attach't to a voman. Vell, you are right, I supposse; toctors and nurses ought to know. But it iss pecause I haff nefer known a pure, unselfish voman like yourself. Putt now I know tifferent, for I haff exshperience't for t'e first time not t'e momentary pleasure putt t'e lasting happiness a man may fint in t'e com-

panionship off a true soul—not t'e excitement putt t'e peace ant comfort she may pring him. *(with emotion)* You haff chainch't my whole life, Miss Vakefielt; you haff help't me to fint my petter self.

(Constance *continues to knit.)*

KARL—Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Pleace pring me a hantkerchief from t'e tresser. *(She leaves her knitting on the chair, walks to the dresser, obtains the handkerchief from a drawer and goes to the far side of the bed to give it to him.)*

KARL—To you pelief me now, Miss Vakefielt, or to you shtill t'ink I am lying to you ass you t'ought last night?

CONSTANCE—I believe you, Mr. Lindenfels, and I am glad you have been converted.

KARL—*(placing the handkerchief to his eyes)* You vill excusse me if I veep a little; I can't help it—I can't help it. I feel so much petter. You are not aple to realize vat a crate torture it hass peen to lie here tay ant night vit you so near, my eyes afrait to meet yours, my lips afrait to moof for fear I might refeal vat my soul vas crafing to exshpress ant for fear you vou't mishtake t'e exshpression off my cratitute for t'e exshpression off a cheap tesire. T'e agony off such a situation vas more painful t'an t'is vount in my site. You von't pelief vat a purten hass peen liftet from my mint—now t'at you unterstant.

CONSTANCE—*(returning to the Morris chair)* I am glad you feel relieved, Mr. Lindenfels; I am very glad.

KARL—T'ank you. Putt I vant you to feel relief't also. Miss Vakefielt, for I pelief you are also carrying a secret in your heart. (Constance, *about to sit down, remains standing on these words.)* Hass not your minute care off me inticatet t'at you also t'ink somet'ing off me?

CONSTANCE—*(taking up her needles and knitting as she stands, her back turned)* I have always given similar aid and attention to all my patients, Mr. Lindenfels. I am always happy to bring relief to any one. I would treat all men with

the same kindness and gentleness with which I would handle my own brothers if they were wounded in battle.

KARL—T'en t'ere iss no ot'er meaning in t'e comfort you haff affortet me?

CONSTANCE—No other meaning than there will be in the comfort which these socks will afford some soldier whom I shall never know and who will never know me.

KARL—Ant you haff felt not a trifle tifferent tovart me t'an you haff felt tovart t'e many you haff nurs't in t'e past?

CONSTANCE—I shall frankly say that I have never before nursed a man who has helped so to reduce the unpleasant part of my work to a minimum or who has treated me with quite so much respect.

KARL—I t'ank you, Miss Vakefielt. I haff alvays felt t'at it vas vit reluctance t'at you bathe't me; I haff alvays t'ought you vere t'inking t'en off my immoral relations vit unclean vimmen. Haff I peen right in t'inking so?

CONSTANCE—*(reluctantly)* Sometimes, perhaps.

KARL—Are you repell't eefen py t'e touch off my hant?

CONSTANCE—*(dropping her knitting on the chair and walking to the near side of the bed)* Why of course not, Mr. Lindenfels. *(He holds out his hand, and she takes it.)*

KARL—I tesire no closer contact t'an t'is vit any pure voman; sexual luff vou't eefen pe repugnant to me since I haff so tefile't ant apuse't it. Putt t'ere can pe happiness vitout t'at; can t'ere not, Miss Vakefielt? *(She does not answer but turns her head away.)* Perhaps I am shpeaking too plainly. You vill excusse me. *(He drops her hand.)*

CONSTANCE—*(returning slowly to the chair)* There should be no embarrassment in speaking plainly—if one also speaks properly.

KARL—I vou't not pe shpeaking off t'is at all, Miss Vakefielt—not eefen properly, hat you not vonce sait sometˈing apout it to me.

CONSTANCE—*(knitting more rapidly than usual)* When, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—Oh, it vasn't in your shleep. You ton't talk in

your shleep like I to. Putt it vas in *my* shleep t'at you sait it—ven I vas not supposse't to hear it, ant I tit not hear it tistinctly, putt t'e sense off it now comes pack to me: it vas somet'ing apout sexual starfation—t'at you exsh-perience't it sometimes. Tit you not say *t'at* vile I vas shtill unter t'e anest'etic from t'e operating room?

CONSTANCE—*(dropping her needles into the chair)* I believe I did, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Ant you vere saying it to me?

CONSTANCE—*(approaching the bed again)* To any one who cared to hear it, Mr. Lindenfels, and even now, when you are wide awake, I will say that I see nothing shameful in purified sexual love; I do not wish to hide my desire for it. It is a desire to be controlled rather than concealed. I believe that the purified and cultured intercourse of the sexes is a thing that would uplift men and women rather than degrade them.

KARL—Oh, it must pe a vonterful t'ing ven it uplifts! To pegin life all ofer again vit a voman off your fiews! *(He extends his hand again; she takes it tenderly.)* Putt I must not t'ink off such t'ings ant, t'ank Got, it iss fery easy for me to forget t'em. Putt it iss for your sake—for your sake only—for vone who iss starfing—t'at I vish in Got's name t'at I vere ass clean ass I vonce use't to pe.

CONSTANCE—*(still holding his hand)* Mr. Lindenfels, between us, under no conditions whatever, could there be anything more than the love of brother and sister. A love beyond that is not mine to accept from any other than him to whom I am betrothed.

KARL—*(gradually letting go of her hand)* You are pe-trot! You haff promis't yourself to anot'er?

CONSTANCE—Yes.

KARL—*(sadly)* T'en I shall alvays pe lonely.

CONSTANCE—You can return to your art; a great artist must be much alone. Miss Le Grand believes your operation will exempt you from being drafted, and therefore your genius, your visions, your ideas and inspirations will

not perish on the field of battle.

KARL—T'e fisions ant iteas vich she hass in mint haff al-re'ty perish't. In a sense I haff peen vountet; it seems ass t'ough mortal life ant tesire haff peen ripp't from my poty.

CONSTANCE—*(bringing the chair from the alcove to his bedside and seating herself)* You have been reborn—reborn with a newer, nobler desire. In a few weeks you will be up and strong again—mentally strong. The ether has purged your mind, and though you may not be able to fight with gun and sword, you will be able to fight valiantly with your pen, sending a great message to the people of the world through your music—not the old music but the new.

KARL—T'e new musik! You tolt me yestertay, Miss Vakefielt, t'at art vich tuss not exshpress vat iss pe'utiful iss merely t'e tictations off a tiseas't mint. It iss my poty t'at hass tiseas't my mint; my musik hass peen passionate ruppish. How can I write t'e new musik ass long ass I haff a poty vich vill nefer pe clean again.

CONSTANCE—By transforming the old passion into a new and higher one. It was Ruskin, I believe, who said that true music is the natural expression of a lofty *passion* for a right cause.

KARL—Ruskin vas an Inklishman.

CONSTANCE—Yes; one of my own countrymen.

KARL—Oh! you are Inklish, Miss Vakefielt?

CONSTANCE—Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Vell t'e fact t'at I am Cherman means t'at my musik vill pe curs't in Amerika.

CONSTANCE—Miss Le Grand and the boy who delivered your flowers told me your music is very popular.

KARL—Yes; my trash ant passionate ruppish iss popular, putt I mean my serious musik vou't pe curs't py t'ose Amerikans who really know vat musik iss.

CONSTANCE—No; to be of German descent is a great advantage to a musician; after all, the real music of the world has been handed down to us from Germany. Of course we have rightly despised and will continue to despise some Ger-

man music—that of Wagner and Strauss which expresses a low—not a lofty—passion, and which is symbolic of war and domination and licentiousness; but we always have loved and always will love Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schumann, Schubert, Händel, Haydn and Brahms—heroes who fought for something higher than world-supremacy but gained the latter in doing so—heroes who fought for the same thing that England, France, Russia and America and even Germany herself, though unknowingly, are fighting for today: harmony and peace.

KARL—You seem to know so much apout musik—apout goot musik, Miss Vakefielt. Can you sing t'ese Cherman songs you mention?

CONSTANCE—I studied them until my mother died, and then, at her request, I became a nurse.

KARL—*(dreaming)* I haff just peen t'inking how vonterful it vou't haff peen hat I known you ven you vere a singer, and yet if you hat not pecome a nurse I vou't nefer haff known you at all. Fate iss a queer t'ing.

CONSTANCE—Music and nursing have much in common.

KARL—Yes; I haff exshperience't how t'e musik of t'e crate masters can pring peace ant relief to a suffering soul.

CONSTANCE—And it was because the great masters suffered and fought that they were able to write such masterpieces; those masterpieces grew out of their sorrows. That is why their songs without words console us.

KARL—Mendelssohn's "Consolation."

CONSTANCE—And Schumann's "Warum?" He wrote it to console himself but he has consoled thousands of others by doing so.

KARL—Ant you vish me likevise to console myself pecausse I haff peen tenite your luff—console myself py writing musik. You t'ink my art vill haff peen purifite py haffing pass't t'rough so crate a sorrow. You vant me to fight for consolation ant peace using musik ass a ve'pon. I untershtant; I untershtant.

CONSTANCE—*(rising and carrying the small chair back to the alcove)* I am so glad you understand, Mr. Lindenfels. We shall often think of each other because we shall be doing the same work: you bringing relief to wounded souls, I to wounded bodies—to the bodies of those who have fought for the same peace toward which you will be striving.

KARL—You mean you are going to t'e front vit T'e Ret Cross?

CONSTANCE—Yes.

KARL—Toctor Caltvell tolt me he vas also going.

CONSTANCE—Oh! did he?

KARL—You are going toget'er—perhaps?

CONSTANCE—Yes.

KARL—Maype it iss to Toctor Caltvell t'at you are petrot?

CONSTANCE—*(taking up her needles and yarn from the Morris chair, and knitting as she sits on the arm)* Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—Vell t'at makes me fery happy, Miss Vakefielt, for two reassons. Vone iss pecausse Toctor Caltvell iss such a fine clean man. He tolt me he vas clean, ant I also he'rt him tell you. I he'rt him tell you many t'ings just pefore I came out of t'e anest'etic. Last night I tolt him t'at I he'rt hiss foice at t'at time, ant he vas fery anxious to know vat it vas he sait. I tolt him I vou't tell him some time later ven I vas more certain. It vas all fery fague t'en; putt it iss fery clear now. Tell him for me t'at it iss true t'at ven vone iss supposse't to pe sort off te't, vone iss somevat conscious off vat iss happening on eart'. Perhaps ven vone iss altoget'er te't, vone vill not only know *exactly* putt vill eefen know more off vat iss happening on eart' t'an t'ose who are shtill liffing in t'e flesh are capaple off knowing.

CONSTANCE—Very well, Mr. Lindenfels; I will tell him this for you.

KARL—Putt t'e ot'er reasson v'y I am happy—t'e pigger reasson—iss t'at he vants you ass a mate only in t'e flesh; he tolt me so—he tolt me so! Your shpirit vill some tay be

free. Free! Ah, t'at makes me feel so happy. So happy!

(There is a short silence, during which Constance *continues to knit rather pensively.)*

KARL—Miss Vakefielt.

CONSTANCE—*(rising and leaving her knitting on the chair.)* Yes, Mr. Lindenfels.

KARL—You von't mint if I shleep a little now?

CONSTANCE—No, Mr. Lindenfels. Your eyes are all swollen and red from weeping; I shall bathe them with cool water.

(The strains of Schumann's "Warum?" come stealing softly through the window. Constance, *standing on the far side of the bed, bathes his eyes with a small cloth, moistened with cool water. He falls asleep while she is doing so. She darkens the room by pulling all the shades down part way.*

Caldwell *slowly and noiselessly opens the door and enters with a large cardboard box under his arm. She motions to him not to speak, placing her finger to her lips. While he is writing a card with his fountain-pen at the dresser, she fills the empty glass vase on the dresser with fresh water from the pitcher on the cabinet, then opens the cardboard box, takes out a large fresh bouquet of pink roses and places it in the vase. She carries the flowers to the little white iron table. He tiptoes to the bed and hands her the card. She reads it in silence and smiles. She unfastens a piece of narrow ribbon from the handle of one of the fruit baskets on the sill and uses it to tie the card to the roses.* Caldwell *places his own hand gently and sympathetically on* Karl's, *as though saying good bye.* Constance *carries the vase of wilted roses and stagnant water to the bathroom.* Caldwell *tiptoes to the dresser, takes up the chart, turns it over and reads what* Karl *has said in his "sleep."* Constance *returns from the bathroom with a small satchel. She stops at the Morris chair, places her knitting in the satchel and then carries it to the door.*

Stealing up behind Caldwell, *she places her arms around his waist and glances over his shoulder at the words she has written. He returns the chart to the dresser, walks to the door with his arm about her and picks up her satchel. They leave the room.*

The strains of "Warum?" continue mournfully.

After the music ceases, Marianne LeGrand *enters the room cautiously with* Maurice Guilbert. *She wears a long black silk cloak which completely conceals the costume beneath it; she carries a roll of manuscript under her arm.* Guilbert *is a statuesque man wearing a high black hat, a black cutaway coat and grey striped trousers, and carrying a cane with a gold knob. He is extremely handsome—a waxen complexion, large dreamy eyes and a long black mustache which he curls incessantly on the ends of his jeweled tapering fingers.)*

MARIANNE—*(with her finger to her lips)* Sh! *(She goes to the bedside to assure herself that* Karl *is asleep; then she returns to* Guilbert *who has remained near the door curling his mustache.)* Good! he is sound asleep, and she is out. It will work fine. It is for you, mon cher Maurice, zat I have planned all zis. Zink of zee money you would lose if zee production would fall zrough—if he *(indicating* Karl *by a twirl of her head)* would not finish zee opera.

GUILBERT—I will not believe that he will not finish it—not until I hear it from Lindenfels himself. He has been writing operas for me for the last four years, and we have never had a quarrel or a failure; we have become such good friends that contracts have become little more than red tape.

MARIANNE—*(drawing him by the arm into the alcove so that* Karl *may not see or hear them if he wakes)* It is because zere has never been a woman to influence him until now.

GUILBERT—Nonsense. Lindenfels has had affairs with scores of women; he has lost his head over every good-looking girl I have ever engaged for the chorus.

MARIANNE—Ah, Maurice, zey were fickle affaires; he enjoy wiz zee chorus girls zee sensual plasir which zee artist need to inflame and inspire him—but Monsieur Karl never *loved* zee girls—non, jamais.

GUILBERT—*(sitting astride the small chair and lighting a cigarette)* Just what do you mean by love, Marianne?

MARIANNE—Ah, Maurice, if we were in true love, we would be perfectly worzless man and woman. *(She perches herself on the window-sill.)* Donnez-moi une cigarette. *(He holds out his silver cigarette-case. She takes one, places it between her lips and bends over to light it from his. After taking a puff or two, she resumes her definition.)* Love is not a zing zat excites one, zat spurs zee man on to zee great accomplishment. Non, non. Love quiets and kills; it ruin zee art and zee artist's career. It is slobber—se conduire d'une manière idiote—zat is what love is, Maurice. It is zee gentleness, zee tenderness, zee sweetness, zee softness—zee damn foolishness! Zat is what love is. *(She takes another puff of her cigarette.)* Mademoiselle Wakefield—she has been oh so gentle wiz Monsieur Karl, so sweet and so tender—like zee mozer feeding zee baby from zee nipple or zee spoon. It is zat what has ruin Monsieur Karl. *(She removes the ashes from her cigarette.)* He is zinking of a home; he speak to me of bedmaking and dishwashing, Maurice. I believe he want a baby to jump up and down on his knee—oh, zeze Germans! zey can be just as sentimental as zey are atrocious. How could Monsieur Karl compose musique wiz a nasty dirty baby squealing and squaking in his ears? Oh how I hate zese women who are nozing more zan breeders, who smozer zee artistic instinct in men wiz zeir slobber and who turn zee artist away from art to zee work ordinaire to earn money to feed zee slobbering infants! I wish all zee slobbering mozers and babies would starve like zee mozers and babies in Belgium; zen zee artists would have zeir freedom.

GUILBERT—*(crossing his arms on the back of the chair)* You think Lindenfels wants to marry his nurse?

MARIANNE—Cela va sans dire; j'en suis certain. He tell Tony, and Tony tell me.

GUILBERT—Is she a pretty thing, Marianne?

MARIANNE—Oui, Maurice—wiz soft white hands.

GUILBERT—We should have got him an ugly nurse—one with warts on her nose.

MARIANNE—But I never dreamed Monsieur Karl would fall in love; I zought he was wise man.

GUILBERT—Well, what are we going to do about it? *(He rises and paces up and down the floor.)*

MARIANNE—*(half closing her eyes)* We can not do anyzing until we get Mademoiselle out of zee way.

GUILBERT—Have her discharged?

MARIANNE—Oui, Maurice.

GUILBERT—For what reason?

MARIANNE—For good raison—for raison zat will disgrace her.

GUILBERT—You don't wish to disgrace an innocent woman?

MARIANNE—Innocent! Ha ha ha . . Zee boy at zee flower-shop where I pay zee bill for zee flowers which I send to Monsieur Karl—zat boy tell me when he bring zee flowers here in zis room he not find Mademoiselle Wakefield on duty at all but in a position wiz Monsieur le docteur which make zee poor flower-boy blush; and even before zee flower-boy come in zee room, he hear zem talk togezer of zee most wicked zings—zey even defend zee sinking of zee *Lusitania.* Ah, Maurice; zis Mademoiselle is not zee angel Monsieur Karl zink she is.

GUILBERT—You are surely not going to believe everything that idiot of a boy has told you?

MARIANNE—Ah, Maurice, I have seen too wiz my own eyes. I have seen her put arms around Monsieur Karl's neck—and zen when I am not here she give him nice bath and sleep zere on zee cot beside him here in zis room all night alone. She is wicked woman like zee rest of us; she only make him zink she is angel. Zere is no woman has so

many opportunities as zee trained nurse. She can defend every affectionate act as belonging to her profession and, wiz her knowledge of prevention and such zings—ah, she can cover up all evidence, Maurice.

GUILBERT—Now come, Marianne, don't *invent* anything nasty to say about her; wait until you are absolutely sure of the charge.

MARIANNE—*(jumping from the sill)* Ah, mon cher Maurice, I will do anyzing—anyzing—anyzing at all to get her out of way so Monsieur Karl will finish zee opera for you—for *you!* It is for you zat I will do zee nasty zing—for you, mon cher Maurice. *(She throws her arm about his neck, her cloak falling off part way and exposing her bare shoulder.)* It is not zat I am jealous of Mademoiselle Wakefield. Non! Non! What care I for Monsieur Karl aside from his musique? He is a mere boy—a playzing zat has run down. You, Maurice, are a man—a big, strong, handsome, satisfying man. It is for you zat I will do zee nasty zing.

(He pats her bare shoulder, and then leaves her quickly, walking to the dresser where he chances to see the chart; he picks it up.)

GUILBERT—*(reading)* "I want to tell you that you have changed the course of my life—changed it from evil to good; and I wish you to know that I love you—love you for doing it—love you with all my soul."

MARIANNE—Yes; zat is zee slobber zat Monsieur Karl write to his nurse.

GUILBERT—This is not Lindenfels's hand-writing; I know that too well to be deceived.

MARIANNE—Non? *(She snatches the chart from his hand, glances at the writing and then turns it over.)* It is like zee writing on zee ozer side of zee chart; it must be Mademoiselle's writing. *(She turns the chart over again and reads.)* "I want to tell you zat you have changed zee course of my life—changed it from evil to good." *(She muses.)* From evil to good; from evil—to good. Why,

mon cher Maurice, she admits herself zat she was a bad woman: "from evil—to good." She was ashamed to speak it to Monsieur Karl's face; she had to write it. I am glad she had to write it; Need I *invent* anyzing to say about her, Maurice? Is not zis evidence enough? Why has he changed zee course of her life? Because she tried to do evil wiz him like wiz Monsieur le docteur—ha ha ha ha ha—and he tell her no and give her a lecture on morality because he love her. Zink of it, mon cher Maurice: A trained nurse trying to ruin sick man! Her own patient! I will publish ziz—her own condemnation—in zee newspaper wiz a big red headline. I will go to zee hospital-office at once wiz zis note and have her discharged and disgraced. *(She walks happily to the door, but turns suddenly before leaving the room.)* While I am gone, mon cher Maurice, you can arrange zee chorus girls around Monsieur Karl's bed; I will tell zem to come in quietly; zey are waiting in zee sun-parlor.

GUILBERT—Marianne, this is absurd; the hospital authorities will not permit singing here; it will disturb the patients.

MARIANNE—Zee auzorities know nozing of it. Gwendolyn, Daisy, Maybelle—zey all have coats over zeir pretty costumes. Nobody know zey are chorus girls. Zee auzorities may stop zem from singing after zey once begin,—but after zey have sung a few bars of Monsieur Karl's musique, zat will be enough to wake him out of his crazy trance and bring him back to his opera.

(She leaves the room, Guilbert *walks to the bed and watches* Karl *as he sleeps peacefully on the pillow. The members of the chorus enter silently, one by one, each removing his or her cloak and dropping it on the floor at the door. Their costumes are spectacular, fantastic, grotesque, vivid in color and immodest and suggestive in design. There are both men and girls including* Gwendolyn, Maybelle, Daisy, Violet *and* Carmen. They *tiptoe noiselessly about the room as* Guilbert *arranges them with whispers and gestures in an effective group*

about the composer's bed. Herr Schmetterling, *a restless conductor, round as a ball, his face puffy and scarlet, his handkerchief continually mopping it, stands on the Morris chair ready to flourish his baton.* Tony *stands beside him with his violin.*

Marianne *returns and beckons to* Guilbert, *who approaches the door to meet her.)*

MARIANNE—*(in a whisper)* Zey tell me she has already left zee hospital; she was so wicked and ashamed zat she could not face any one, so she is going to sail for France wiz zee Red Cross.

GUILBERT—Then you ought to be happy; she has saved you a lot of dirty work.

MARIANNE—Ah, I would have enjoyed see dirty work; I would have enjoyed seeing her disgraced. She will pollute all zee soldiers of my native country. Before she land in la belle France, I hope she get a German bullet zrough her heart.

GUILBERT—Come; Lindenfels may wake up before we start singing, and that would spoil the whole effect.

(Marianne *quickly discards her cloak, disclosing her sensational poppy-colored costume. She takes her place before the chorus and gives* Herr Schmetterling *the signal to begin.* Tony *sounds the key-note on his violin.* Schmetterling *lifts his arms and then begins to beat time comically. The chorus sing entirely off the key.* Marianne *trills and dances.* Tony *scratches his violin frantically.* Guilbert *raises the window shades to admit the sunlight in lieu of the calcium.)*

Karl *awakens, and* Marianne *rushes to him.)*

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl—mon petit génie! It is your own beautiful musique zat has awake you from your trance to zee old existence!

KARL—Pe'utiful Musik? It iss rotten, rotten, rotten! It iss like so many howling togs ant squealing cats. *(The members of the chorus mumble among themselves.)* No more off it! Not ano'ter note!

MARIANNE—It is because mon cher Karl is not conducting it himself. Herr Schmaeterlinck know not how to conduct it right; n'est ce pas, Monsieur Schmaeterlinck?

SCHMETTERLING—*(jumping from the Morris chair like a squirrel and approaching the bed in small leaps)* Ach, Herr Lindenfels, es geht nicht; es geht nicht. Ohne dich ist alles freudenlos. Kein' Lebendigkeit!

KARL—*(without restraint)* Geh' mir weg, du kleine Roterübe; halt's Maul!

(The little conductor quickly makes his way, in small leaps, back to the Morris chair, where he perches on one arm with his feet on the seat, alternately shaking his head lento and mopping his face presto.)

MARIANNE—It is not bad musique, mon cher Karl; zee public will go crazy when zey hear it.

KARL—To hear it iss enough to make any vone crazy!

MARIANNE—It is because it is not yet complet, mon cher Karl. I brought zee manuscript from your studio so zat you could finish it.

KARL—*(gruffly snatching the manuscript from her hand)* Finish it? Finish it? T'is iss how I vill finish it! *(He tears it to pieces and tosses it into the air over his bed.)*

GUILBERT—*(on the far side of the bed)* But my dear Lindenfels, you are under contract to finsh this opera, and what is more: I have paid you an advance royalty.

KARL—*(sitting up in bed for the first time)* Vat to I care for your contract or royalties? Vat meaning has contract and law to you? *(He points to* Guilbert.*)* To you who liffs so illegitimately wit her! *(He points to* Marianne.*)* Ta't poisonous serpent! Ant ass for royalties— t'at money iss also poison, ant you shall haff it pack; I ton't vant it. I vill haff not'ing more to to vit men ant vimmen who haff no reshpect for purity; I vill haff not'ing more to to vit people who can't sing ant act ant tance ant play unless t'eir poties are inflame't vit trink ant passion. Ton't shpeak to me again apout my opera; it iss not'ing putt a fehicle for dishplaying immorality ant for amusing immoral people. It

iss so much trash; it iss an unhe'lt'y, tegenerate t'ing—just like I vas pefore I avaken't to t'e new life from t'e life into vich t'is shnake off a voman charm't me. I mean you, Marianne; I mean you!

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl, if it was not for Marianne, you would still be zee unknown artist, starving, dying. It was I who discover mon petit génie.

KARL—Putt it vas not my petter self t'at you tiscovert. It vas your tamnaple magic t'at transform't my petter self into a mere inshtrument to satisfy your filt'y tesires ant to hoist you to t'e top of t'e rotten latter off fame. You tit not lafish your money to tefelop my genius putt to proshtitute it—to make it a trunken tiseas't organ to grint out unmusikal accompaniments for your peastly foice. No; it vas not my art you vanted to tefelop ant pring pefore t'e puplic; it vas t'rough my art t'at you vantet to pring yourself pefore t'e puplic; putt not pefore you twisted ant tiseas't my art, ant my poty also, to fit yourself, yourself, yourself! You haff not tone t'at much *(He snaps his fingers.)* for me; vat you haff tone hass peen all for Marianne Le Crant. You to not know vat it means to to anyt'ing for ot'ers; your self iss your Got, ant a pollutet Got too. I vish I hat nefer seen your paintet, poisonous lips ant your lying, lustful eyes. I vish I hat peen left to shtruggle in poferty ant opscurity; t'en I might haff achief't somet'ing vorth vile. Perhaps it iss not too late to pegin all ofer again. T'at iss vat I vill try to to, ant I vill shtart py saying goot-pye to you ant to your Maurice ant all your miseraple associates who earn t'eir liffing t'rough t'e contortions off t'eir foul poties—who to not eefen know t'at they haff a prain ant a soul.

TONY—*(stepping before the bewildered chorus and turning his back to the bed)* Ladies and gendlemen: Mista Carlo —he mad; he knowa nod whad he say; you musda nod listen; he crazy *(his finger to his forehead)* in da nud; we musda waid—waid till he geda bedder; he now mucha sick—sick monkey. Sick monkey!

KARL—*(reaching for the box of cigars on the window-*

sill) Tony, it iss pecausse you are ass foul ant file as t'e rest off t'em t'at you are tefenting t'em. I nefer vant to see you again, Tony. Out off my sight! Here, take your rotten cigars vit you! *(He throws one handful of cigars after the other at the violinist. The men of the chorus pick them up from the floor, and then start to leave the room.)* Out off my sight! Out off my sight!

GWENDOLYN—*(coming forward)* You will not send your Gwendolyn away after she has sent you such a nice box-ful of kisses?

MAYBELLE—*(taking her position beside* Gwendolyn) And you are not going to put me out when I sent you the nuts?

DAISY—*(stepping up beside* Maybelle) And you ain't goin' to harm your little hellcat who sent you the damn pretty red cherries that growed on her lips? Mein Karl; Ish liebe dish!

CARMEN—*(statuesque and singing her greeting in a deep contralto to the motif of the Habanera)* Don Carlo, come back to Carmen who has sent you all the pears and plums.

VIOLET—*(in a squeaky voice)* Dear Karl, little Violet thinks you look sweet enough to eat.

(They are standing in a semicircle around his bed.)

KARL—Out off my sight! Out off my sight—all off you! I haff hat enough off your canty ant your fruit ant your luff-making. I vish no more off it; it vou't pe ass poisonous to my lips ass your looks are to my eyes ant your foices to my ears. Here; take it avay vit you. Pegone! Pegone! *(He reaches for the boxes and baskets on the window-sill, and throws the candy and the fruit in their midst; they rush away screaming, leaving their capes and coats on the floor.)* Out off my sight! Pegone! Fipers! Sirens!

MARIANNE—Il est fou—fou a lier!

(He throws several plums at her.)

GUILBERT—We can do nothing with him until he is well again.

(He fires a large orange at Guilbert's *high black hat.)*

KARL—You, too—all of you—pegone! Get out off my sight! Fools! Togs! Cats! Geese! Shvine! Hussies! Proshtitutes! Liars! Impeciles! Itiots! Asses! Vine-pellies! Get out! Get out! Out off my sight!

(He continues to rave and rant, tossing about madly on his bed, and hurling a handful of fruit at them with each exclamation of contempt. He does not cease until he has thrown everything he can lay hands on—his pillow, his drinking-glass, his reading-lamp—until the last one of them has fled from the room. The he falls back on the bed exhausted; reaching nervously for the call-bell, he rings it frantically as though the building were in flames.

After waiting a short time that seems like a century of agony to him, he sees Abigail Strong *enter the room. She is a huge, awkward, homely, mannish woman in an ill-fitting nurse's uniform.)*

ABIGAIL—Good God! What's happened here?

KARL—*(gasping and writhing)* I vant Miss Vakefielt! I vant Miss Vakefielt!

ABIGAIL—Miss Wakefield has left the hospital, sir.

KARL—Left so soon? Left alre'ty?

ABIGAIL—Yes; and I am to take you in charge from now on. It looks like a mighty big task, but I reckon I can manage it. *(She pushes back her sleeves, takes a few steps forward, kicking the oranges and apples and coats out of her way as she does so, and strikes a pose, her hands on her hips.)* My name is Strong.

KARL—*(breathing heavily)* V'y titn't you come arount a little sooner? T'ere shou't haff peen a policeman here to trive t'ose itiots out.

ABIGAIL—*(taking two steps forward)* A policeman!

KARL—Yes; I trite to pe vone ass vell ass I cou't.

ABIGAIL—You've been very disobedient, sir. Weren't you told to lie still? You'll suffer for having done this! *(She walks authoritatively to the bedside, and points to the*

counterpane with her long finger.) Do you see that?

KARL—Vat?

ABIGAIL—The blood oozing through the bedclothes! You've broken the stitches and opened your wound—that's what you've done. And the Lord only knows what internal injuries have resulted! I shouldn't be surprised if you've tied your guts in a knot. I shall have to summon Doctor Caldwell at once. Lie still—lie absolutely still, until I return. *(She turns about and marches toward the door, kicking the boxes and fruit from right to left; she stops abruptly and looks back.)* Don't move a particle, sir; don't even breathe.

(She walks through the door colliding with a Clerk, *who holds a pad in his left hand and a fountain-pen in his right.)*

CLERK—Pardon me. Is this Mr. Lindenfels's room?

ABIGAIL—Yes; but it's in an awful shape, and so is he.

CLERK—I must speak with him nevertheless. How old are you, Mr. Lindenfels?

KARL—*(moaning)* Tventy-sefen.

CLERK—Then you'll have to fill out one of these blanks for Conscription.

ABIGAIL—He'll never be able to go to war; he'll be an invalid for the rest of his life. *(She leaves the room.)*

CLERK—That makes no difference; he must fill out his registration-card for the Government. *(He walks to the bedside.)* What is your name in full, sir?

KARL—*(groaning with pain)* Karl Lindenfels.

CLERK—*(writing on the pad)* And you said you were twenty-seven?

KARL—Yes, sir; tventy-sefen.

CLERK—Your address?

KARL—Charch Vashinkton Apartments.

CLERK—And the date of your birth?

KARL—Chune t'e fourteenth. *(in pain)* I can't t'ink off t'e year.

CLERK—1890 according to your age. Were you born

in the United States?

KARL—No; in Chermany, sir—at Düsseldorf.

CLERK—Have you been naturalized?

KARL—Yes, I haff peen in Amerika for six years.

CLERK—What is your present occupation?

KARL—I am a composer, sir.

CLERK—Have you a father or a mother solely dependent on you?

KARL—My parents are poth in t'e olt country. I ton't eefen know if t'ey are liffing. I haff not he'rt from t'em since—since—*(He sobs.)*

CLERK—Are you married or single?

KARL—I vish to Got I vere.

CLERK—Which?

KARL—Marrie't.

CLERK—Then you wish to God you were single? eh?

KARL—No; my Got, can't you untershtant? I am sinkle unfortunately.

CLERK—I get you; I understand. Any children under twelve to support?

KARL—You are making a fool off me; I tell you I am sinkle.

CLERK—I know; but unmarried men sometimes have children to support.

KARL—Vell, I haff none t'at *I* know off.

CLERK—No brother or sister under twelve to support?

KARL—I haff vone brot'er in Chermany—olter t'an myself.

CLERK—Have you had any military experience?

KARL—I serf't for vone year in t'e Cherman Infantry. I hatet it—hatet t'e vay I vas orter't apout like a tog, ant I tespise't t'e conceit of t'e officers. I hat alvays vanted to write musik—goot musik like Schumann ant Mendelssohn. My vat'er helt a very high commission in t'e Cherman Army; he riticule't my musik ant sait t'at his sons must eit'er pecome officers or outcasts. T'e lack off freetom ant t'e shtrict tiscipline ant tomination in army life ant home vas repugnant to

my genius. I refoltet: in a moment off matness I shtole enough money from my mot'er's trunk; bought a ticket vit my brot'er's passport ant sail't to Amerika—to Amerika vere men are free—free! If I hat met t'ere t'e right voman who vou't haff untershtoot t'e shpiritu'l appeal in true musik and in true luff, I vou't not pe sinkle; I vou't haff marrie't ant vou't haff hat a crate career. Putt crowing veary of failure ant t'e lack off attention vich shou't haff inshpire't me to vork t'e harter to improof my art, I fell prey to parasitic recognition ant cheap success vit all its false comforts ant tegrating luxshuries. Ant t'en came t'e reaction off t'e merciless oppression off militarism: I pecame too free; vere t'ere shou't haff peen reassonaple restraint, t'ere vas only lawlessness ant licentiousness until—until—vell, you may lift up t'e petclo'es ant see for yourself.

CLERK—Do you claim exemption from the draft in the United States?

KARL—*(tossing about restlessly on the bed)* No; for Got's sake, no! Let me fight! Let me fight vit all my heart ant soul! Let me fight for Righteousness—for Righteousness Eferlasting!

CLERK—Sign your name here, please.

(The Clerk *hands him the blank and the pen. The strains of "The Star Spangled Banner" burst suddenly and grandly through the open windows. A brass band, followed by American soldiers in khaki with Old Glory waving triumphantly above them, marches up the street. The* Clerk *walks to the large window and waves his handkerchief.* Abigail Strong, *returning unaccompanied by the doctor, dances awkwardly in tempo with the music to the window beside the bed, eagerly watching the parade and ignoring her patient.)*

ABIGAIL—*(shouting)* Doesn't Doctor Caldwell look stunning in a uniform? And just see how he's smiling!

(Karl Lindenfels, *writhing and groaning in agony, is trying to sign his name, the crimson blood spreading over the white counterpane.)*

ACT IV

ACT IV.

SCENE—The Roof Garden of the Hospital.
A few weeks later.

A row of four white pillars, equally spaced, extends from the left front of the stage to the back center. Between the two central pillars there are double doors through which one passes from the covered part of the roof (behind the pillars) to the uncovered part (before the pillars); these doors open out. Between the first and second pillars and between the third and fourth, there are double windows on hinges, the windows opening in. Before each window stands a box of plants with brilliant vermilion blossoms. There are two awnings, striped in ultramarine-blue and white, one over each double window. The awnings are drawn halfway up, and the windows and doors are open to make the covered part of the roof as light and cool as possible. Through the windows one sees tables and chairs. An iron railing extends from the farthest pillar to the right front of the stage, so that the part of the uncovered roof on the stage is triangular in shape. The roof however extends several feet beyond this railing. There are benches, plain chairs and rolling-chairs placed here and there on this triangular space. The view from the roof is characteristic of that seen from elevated places. Near by there are tree-tops and a church-steeple with a spire; in the distance, along the horizon, there are silhouettes of tall office buildings, many of which are surmounted by the frameworks of gigantic electric signs. The western sky is aflame with a gorgeous sunset; above all there is an expanse of turquoise blue.

Several of the chairs and benches are occupied by invalids, men, women and children, some with and some without uniformed nurses in attendance.

In a roller-chair near the right front of the stage, sits a young woman wrapped in a white blanket from the waist down. Her face is pale and thin and sad, but her features strongly resemble those of Constance Wakefield. *A young man in khaki sits on the bench beside her, holding her hand. In face and figure he reminds one very much of* Harbison Caldwell. *The crimson sunshine falls across his forehead revealing an expression of profound grief.*

In a roller-chair near the left front of the stage sits Mrs. Chandler—*a loquacious old lady of seventy some years; her hair is not grey however, although her head shakes continually and her cheeks are withered and wrinkled. She is also wrapped in a blanket, but nevertheless makes frequent use of the palm-leaf fan she holds in her bony hand. Her nurse,* Miss Stafford, *sits before her, knitting.*

There are several invalids leaning against the railing, watching the changing colors of the sky. In the center, gazing pensively into the very heart of the sunset, with no one very close to him on either side, stands Karl Lindenfels. *This is the first view we have had of him standing. He is not so tall as* Harbison Caldwell *although his emaciated flesh and flabby muscles still cling to a framework which at one time must have held up a sturdy well-developed body; his crutches are leaning against the railing beside him. He wears a brown velvet jacket, light flannel trousers and a pair of comfortable slippers; he is bare-headed, his blonde hair tousled by the breeze. The mask of dissipation has for the greater part disappeared from his face, and there is a pathetic, somewhat ethereal, look about his sunken eyes.)*

MRS. CHANDLER—*(in a high-pitched wavering voice)* Can you tell me what's wrong with this young woman in the roller-chair across from me, Miss Stafford?

MISS STAFFORD—A maternity case, Mrs. Chandler; her child was born here at the hospital—a perfectly wonder-

ful baby boy.

MRS. CHANDLER—And the young man in uniform is the father I reckon?

MISS STAFFORD—Yes; and he is going to sail for France tomorrow; he has come to bid his wife and baby farewell.

MRS. CHANDLER—Oh, it's so sad; isn't it? It almost breaks my poor old heart to look in that direction. My grandson, George, came to the hospital this morning to say goodbye to me; but his parting didn't seem nearly so pathetic to me as this one—and yet I had always hoped to see him a father like that boy over there in the uniform. George is a great big strong fellow with brown cheeks and curly reddish hair—and he was clean as a whistle, Miss Stafford. He had never tasted liquor and he was almost afraid to look at a girl, but he had the biggest, kindest heart that ever beat in a human bosom. I have often thought what a fine husband he would make for some dear soul of a girl, and I've often thought what wonderful healthy, happy children he might help to bring into the world and what a service he would be performing for his country by doing so. It had been the one thing I had looked forward to all my life: to see that boy married and to feel the pride in being the great grandmother to a future president of the United States—perhaps. Each year I had watched for the sweet passion to develop in his strong clean body; I've been lying in wait to see some dear girl come along who would just win dear George's big, kind heart all of a sudden. But I've been disappointed. The passion came all right, but it wasn't the sweet passion I had hoped for; it was a mad desire to wipe Germany off the face of the earth. I would never have thought it in George who has always been so quiet and gentle. But he began to read the patriotic stuff in the daily papers, and it seemed the devil took hold of him and lured him into one of those training camps. He stayed there for several months, and when he came home, there was whiskey on his breath—and I don't doubt in the least but that he has been initiated into other

low habits as well; you know the kind of women who loiter about such places. When he kissed me good-bye it wasn't the pure, pleasing kiss he used to give me, and the look in his eyes was so nasty and bloody. That's why his parting didn't seem pathetic to me. May the good Lord forgive me for saying it, but for some reason or other I was not so sorry to see him going: for it didn't seem to be George at all who was leaving me, but a type of man without whom the world would be a whole lot better off. Isn't it terrible how young men are transformed and ruined by liquor and prostitutes and war?

MISS STAFFORD—Indeed it is, Mrs. Chandler.

(The young soldier wheels his wife through the double doors.)

MRS. CHANDLER—*(twisting her neck to follow him with her eyes)* That young husband's face looks familiar, but I suppose it's because I can't see so very well. Think of this fine strong fellow just at the height of his manhood! Within a month his splendid body may be blown to atoms. And it is only the physically fit—only the best of human flesh and bone that War demands for cannon-fodder. When I think of this young husband and of thousands of other boys who are going to give up their promising young lives, while I—a worthless old granny—am left here at home to live, it makes me furious; it really does, Miss Stafford. I am not so self-depreciative as to believe that I have never done a service for my country—for I have borne and raised eight children; but I do candidly admit that my days of productiveness and usefulness are past. I've out-lived my husband by twenty years, and the only thing I'm fit for is to die. But it seems nothing will or can kill me. I've had every ill under the sun, and I've been in three railway accidents and two runaways, and now, at the age of seventy-three, my body was actually cut to pieces under the surgeon's knife—and yet I live! I believe if I were to be struck by one of those German torpedoes, I'd still survive. But these fine young men who would be of such great use to the country

in the future—they are going to France to be shot down like dogs. And they will probably die—die without aid perhaps—while I—a worthless old granny—I continue to live surrounded by nurses and physicians whose constant and excessive attention is enough to *kill* an ordinary being. Why do they keep on experimenting, trying to preserve me like one of those curious and rare but perfectly worthless skeletons one sees in a museum? Why don't they turn all their attention to our boys over there and let my light go out?

(The invalids are now leaving the roof one by one to return to their rooms; only a few remain.)

MISS STAFFORD—The American boys who are wounded in France will be well taken care of, Mrs. Chandler.

MRS. CHANDLER—Oh I know our Red Cross is a very wonderful and reliable organization: I just gave them five-hundred dollars myself.

MISS STAFFORD—I realize that the public have contributed very generously and that a large financial endowment is essential; but it will be from the hundreds of nurses and doctors who have offered actual service that our boys will get the direct attention they deserve.

MRS. CHANDLER—Yes, my dear, but modern warfare is so treacherous and so far-reaching that even those who are sent to relieve the wounded are often wounded more seriously themselves.

MISS STAFFORD—It's true: one can never tell just when or where something is going to explode even before one reaches the field of battle. Think of that terrible accident that happened a week or so ago—that accident that occurred during gun practice on one of the ships carrying our soldiers to France.

MRS. CHANDLER—Yes; I do recall something about that. Just what was it, Miss Stafford?

MISS STAFFORD—Two very close friends of mine sailed on that same ship: Constance Wakefield, a trained nurse who practiced here at the hospital up to a few days

before she sailed—and Doctor Caldwell who was interned here.

(By this time all of the invalids except Lindenfels *have left the roof. He remains motionless in his former position, gazing into the sunset the colors of which are gradually beginning to fade.)*

MRS. CHANDLER—Oh yes, I remember Doctor Caldwell. He used to drop into my room almost every evening to tell me a story and then bid me good night. Bless his sweet soul! He's just the picture of my John at the time we were on our honeymoon. But you aren't going to tell me the dear fellow was shot?

MISS STAFFORD—No; *he* wasn't shot, but—Miss Wakefield was—instantly killed.

MRS. CHANDLER—*(dropping her fan)* Instantly killed!

MISS STAFFORD—*(placing her handkerchief to her eyes)* Yes—and to think it was their—their wedding trip!

MRS. CHANDLER—Their wedding trip! Oh, how pathetic! The poor dear Doctor. To think of him losing his wife when he was just beginning to live! After all, I suppose it's a greater sorrow for a man to lose his bride than for a young mother to lose her husband. You see a young mother has a future in her child and knows how to make a home for herself, and her former passion for her husband has relaxed and changed in part into maternal affection;—but it's different with a man: God never intended that he should live alone. Poor Doctor Caldwell! I wonder if he had a religion that will console and save him and help him to believe that they shall meet again hereafter. How my heart aches for him! If only the good Lord had taken me in her stead—me—a worthless old granny—who has outlived her husband by twenty years. If only those twenty years could have been added to Mrs. Caldwell's life! To think how happy he made my lonely old soul by coming to my room each evening to bid me good night! To think that I who would have been willing to give my life to make him happy

am unable to speak a single word of cheer to relieve him in his present sorrow and loneliness!

MISS STAFFORD—You are trembling, Dearie; are you cold? *(She rises.)*

MRS. CHANDLER—I believe I am. Wait till I take out my thermometer and see. *(She opens the front of her dressing-sack to get at the little thermometer she wears about her neck; she holds it up very close to her eyes.)* Yes; I am very cold. The air is getting rather damp and chilly. You had better take me down to my room. *(She glances about the roof.)* I notice that all the *younger* invalids have turned in for the night—all but The Insane Composer. *(The nurse wheels her off the stage as she continues to talk.)* Do you suppose he's been disappointed in love, Miss Stafford? Or is he brooding over some plot to blow up the hospital? German blood, you know.

(Lindenfels *is left alone, unaware of the fact that all the others have departed. He continues to gaze blankly at the last streak of dying color in the west. The light from the lamps in the covered part of the roof shines noticeably through the doors and windows. The electric signs on the distant buildings now light up, one by one.*

Marianne Le Grand *appears in the doorway. She wears high white shoes and a long purple cape shimmering with spangles; her large black hat is trimmed with brightly colored flowers. She carries a hand-bag and a large cardboard box. She places the box on one of the chairs.)*

MARIANNE—*(softly)* Mon cher Karl.

(There is no response.)

MARIANNE—*(coming a step closer)* Mon cher Karl.

(He neither responds nor moves.)

MARIANNE—*(louder and still closer)* Mon cher Karl!

(He turns his eyes away from the sky and stares at her strangely.)

MARIANNE—It is Marianne; she has once more come to her petit génie. *(He continues to stare at her in silence;*

she sits down on one of the benches.) So you are still here at zee hospital dreaming, dreaming, dreaming . .

KARL—*(remaining motionless)* Ant you haff come again to tishturp my tream—my tream off happiness?

MARIANNE—Yes, I have come again, and I will continue to come again and again and again and again until mon cher Karl stop dreaming. Do you know what zey call you—zee nurses—zee docteurs—zee patients—everybody? Zey call you Zee Insane Composer.

KARL—Vat to I care vat t'ey call me! *(He slowly turns his head away and again gazes across the tree-tops.)*

MARIANNE—But you must care. You must prove zat you have greater mind zan anyone of zem: you must come back and finish zee opera: "Zee Great Reliever." I say you *must* finish it, for Marianne will keep on coming until you do.

KARL—You vill not let me rest?

MARIANNE—Non, non.

KARL—You vill not let me try—try vit all my heart ant soul—to pecome a goot man again?

MARIANNE—Non, non; you must give up zis struggle to become good man. It is not naturelle for mon cher Karl to become good man; it would not be good for zee world for mon cher Karl to become good man. Mon cher Karl, good man? Ha ha ha . . . Zat sound so funny—so silly.

KARL—It sounts funny to a vicket person; not to a goot vone.

MARIANNE—*(tormentingly)* Not to Mademoiselle Wakefield—eh?

KARL—*(with a shudder)* Ton't preat' her name; your lips vill contaminate it.

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl; you still zink Mademoiselle was an angel. *(She opens her handbag and produces a folded paper.)* Zen you never saw zis which she left in your room zee day she went away; she had not zee courage to say it while you were wake; she had to write it on zee

back of zee docteur's chart while you sleep. I have saved it for mon cher Karl so he can see what kind of woman Mademoiselle Wakefield was. *(She rises, walks to him, holding out the paper; he does not turn about, but reaches for the paper slowly and, without unfolding it, places it in the pocket of his jacket.)* Ah well, if it make you feel bad to read it now, keep it till sometime again when I am not near. It is all you have to remember her; she left you nozing more. *(She returns to the bench.)* If only she had give you her latest photographie. But zat is now impossible: Poor Mademoiselle! it is too bad zat nasty gun blow off her pretty face and her soft white hand.

(He sinks down on his knees, groaning and clinging to the railing.)

MARIANNE—*(rushing to him)* Ah, mon cher Karl is still weak from zee operation. Come let Marianne help you to a chair.

KARL—*(In a loud whisper)* Ton't touch me! Ton't touch me! *(With the aid of the railing, he gets on his feet again and, using his crutches, he manages to drag himself to the bench on which he sinks with a heavy sigh.)*

MARIANNE—*(standing behind the bench and stroking his hair)* Why you not want Marianne to touch you? Mademoiselle Wakefield no longer have nice soft hand. She must have been zinking of mon cher Karl wiz her hand over her eyes, when zee nasty gun shoot zee zought out of her head. You must let Marianne pat you now zat Mademoiselle is gone forever.

KARL—V'y iss she gone for-efer?

MARIANNE—Why, mon cher Karl; because she is dead —very much dead.

KARL—T'ere may pe a life after te'th—a lite vitout sin.

MARIANNE—*(coming from behind the bench and sitting in one of the chairs facing him)* A life wizout sin! Jamais. Sin is each day become more and more necessaire for life. What is zee biggest sin? It is to kill. But killing is zee grand occupation—zee occupation comme il faut of

today. Zey no longer say: "Zou shalt not kill." Non; cela est tres passé. Zee Christianity is out of date. In Europe zey are blowing up all zee churches and cazedrals, and in America zey are hanging flags on zee pulpits and putting zee musket on zee shoulder of Christ telling him to shoot—and kill. Non, mon cher Karl; killing is no longer sin; and when zee big sin is no longer sin, zen zee little sins is no sins too. Zee soldier who go to France to kill, he say: "Before I commit zee big sin for zee good of my country I will commit lots of little sins for zee joy of myself, for after I die, I have no more plasir wiz my body." So he take any pretty girl he find anywhere and sin a little.

KARL—How can you say such t'ings, Marianne?

MARIANNE—Because I am not afraid to speak zee truth, and you, who are artist and know it should not be afraid to portray it. Zee man who has not sinned has not lived; zee man who stops sinning is dead.

KARL—You are fery wrong, Marianne. True life iss moral ant t'at iss t'e life I vish to portray vit my art from now on. It iss a new kint of musik I vish to write—t'e kint I hat alvays intentet to write—t'e kint of musik for vich I left my home ant my country—t'e kint off musik I hat succeetet in writing until I met you—until you ruin't my genius maype for-efer. *(With his elbows resting on his knees, he buries his face in his hands, and sobs.)*

MARIANNE—*(triumphantly)* Forever, mon cher Karl?

KARL—Yes, maype for-efer. I sit townshtairs in my room efery morning trying to write pigger, petter musik for a right cause. I try; I try. Oh, how I try! Putt your influence hass spoil't eferyt'ing for me. It vou't haff peen tifferent if she hat liff't—if *she* hat liff't.

MARIANNE—*(rising and standing behind the bench again.)* But she is gone forever, and now zere is only one kind of music zat mon cher Karl can write. It is zee opera which Marianne will sing. You will finish zat opera, mon cher Karl; you will finish it for me. *(She throws her arms about his neck almost strangling him.)*

KARL—*(gasping for breath, unlocking her arms and throwing them back)* No, no, no! How often must I tell you I vill nefer nefer finish t'at opera?

MARIANNE—You will never finish it as long as you stay here cooped up in zis house of gloom and dispair wiz so many cripples and invalids. You must come to ozer roof-gardens where zee orchestre play zee musique which mon cher Karl has already composed.

KARL—It iss on t'is roof vere her shpirit linkers; it vas here vere she use't to come ant rest after her tay's vork.

MARIANNE—Perhaps she will come tonight. Perhaps zat is why you have been waiting here—for anozer Mademoiselle Wakefield. *(She removes her hat, placing it on one of the chairs; she takes a nurse's cap from her handbag and pins it to her hair; she opens the cardboard box and removes a large bouquet of pink roses, holding them in her arms.)*

KARL—*(knowing nothing of what is taking place behind him)* No, Marianne; t'ere iss only vone Miss Vakefielt; t'ere can nefer pe anot'er. She iss t'e only vone I vill efer luff.

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl, so say Riccardo in mon cher Karl's opera when Rosalie find out he is wicked and drown herself in zee ocean to make Riccardo lonely and sad. But when Hortense, zee wicked woman, come to him dressed like Rosalie and singing zee big song: "Sin, Sin, Sin—is zee greatest reliever to man? Sin, Sin, Sin . . .

(She throws off her long purple cape and stands before him in a nurse's uniform.)

KARL—*(temporarily bewildered)* Miss Vakefielt! It iss your shpirit I see! *(He rises suddenly and then sinks down on to the bench again.)* No; it iss an illusion; it iss Marianne.

MARIANNE—Ah, mon petit génie, it has always been an illusion. It has always been Marianne from the beginning. *(She sits beside him.)* It was Marianne who found you on zee floor of zee studio; it was Marianne who sent you to zee hospital; at zee hospital zey wounded you—wounded you very carefully, and when you come out of zee aneszetic

you see zee pink roses which Marianne send you; it was Marianne who nursed mon cher Karl, but when he see her all in white, he call her Miss Wakefield and zink she is an angel; but it was always Marianne. As Miss Wakefield she not excite mon cher Karl but nurse him tenderly like an angel until his wound is healed again, but now his body is strong and his manhood is come back, and Miss Wakefield again become Marianne, and Marianne now want Karl to love her as before. *(She sinks back on his thighs, placing one arm about his neck and holding the roses up to his nose.)* She want him to love her to his body's content, and she want him to finish zee opera which his love for her inspire.

KARL—*(taking the roses in his arms)* Marianne you are using your magic on me again; you are trying to confuse me—to get yourself ant Miss Vakefielt so interminkelt in my mint t'at I von't pe aple to tistinquish petween goot ant eefil; you are trying to run t'em toget'er so I can not tell t'em apart.

MARIANNE—Ah, mon cher Karl, zere is no distinction. Love itself is sin, and we shall love eachozer. You must come wiz me over zere. *(She points to the electric-light signs on the horizon.)* Over zere where zee lights are gleaming! On zose roof gardens zey are playing mon cher Karl's musique, and zerefore everybody is gay and happy; on zis roof garden mon cher Karl's musique has been forgot, and zerefore all zee peoples are sick and gloomy. You will come away from here wiz Marianne. *(She rises and approaches the railing.)* See, down zere—oh! it make me dizzy to look—down zere is Marianne's limousine standing near zee sidewalk. In it we will go togezer away from zis lonely place, and we will drink absinthe and smoke cigarette and enjoy all ze plasir zee body of man and woman can afford; for once zee body is gone, zere will be no more plasir. Zee life of zee spirit? Ah, mon cher Karl, zat is an illusion.

KARL—*(all the while fondling and smelling the roses)* Toctor Caltvell t'ought so too; I vonder if he shtill t'inks so.

MARIANNE—Of course he does; he is sensible, im-

moral man, mon cher Karl.

KARL—*(angrily)* He iss not immoral, Marianne.

MARIANNE—He had immoral relations wiz Mademoiselle Wakefield.

KARL—You lie Marianne; he vas marrie't to her.

MARIANNE—Married! And mon cher Karl love married woman? I tell you all love is immoral and sin.

KARL—I luff her shpirit only.

MARIANNE—But her spirit also belong to Monsieur le docteur.

KARL—Toctor Caltvell vill not eefen haff her *shpirit;* he hass giffen her shpirit to me. *(He reaches into his jacket-pocket and produces a card with a ribbon fastened to it.)* T'e pink roses fatet ant viltet, putt after Miss Vakefielt vent avay t'ey pecame fresher ant more fragrant t'an pefore, ant I fount t'is cart tite to t'em. I can not see to reat it now, putt I know vat iss on it: "T'ese roses—a sympol off t'e shpirit off my vife (Constance Vakefielt)—t'ese roses to Karl Lindenfels from Harpison Caltvell." I t'ought t'e roses hat fatet ant viltet again, Marianne, putt I see t'ey are fresher t'an ever. *(He ties the card to the new bunch of roses.)* It iss queer how her shpirit only *seems* to fate ant vilt ant t'en come pack to me alvays finer t'an pefore; it shows t'at t'e shpirit nefer ties. Nefer!

MARIANNE—So mon cher Karl have zee spirit of Constance to love and zee body of Marianne—a spiritual and a material wife like Maeterlinck! But zink of poor Monsieur le docteur! he not even have a spirit to put his arm around. Zink how Monsieur le docteur wish he could patch up his wife's body like he patch up mon cher Karl's body after zee surgeon kill him a little, so Monsieur le docteur could enjoy it again like mon cher Karl can now enjoy his wiz Marianne—enjoy zee great relief and zee great plasir which inspire zee great art. Yes; Marianne save mon cher Karl's body and wiz it she will save his art. She will come to him again and again and again and again until she succeed separating his body and his art from his insane

spirit which belong to Madame Caldwell.

KARL—You vill come again and again and again until you succeet in separating my shpirit from my poty?

MARIANNE—Oui, mon cher Karl.

KARL—You neet not come again, Marianne; you vill succeet tonight.

MARIANNE—Tonight! *(She cuddles up to him on the bench.)* Ah, I knew I would win you back, mon cher Karl, even zough you did hit poor Marianne in zee eye wiz a plum. Nasty boy.

KARL—Yes, Marianne; you haff peen fictorious. My poty iss yours; it vill come town to your limousine on t'e sitevalk, and you can haul it avay ant fill it vit vine ant haff all t'e pleasure you vish vit it, ant out off its orkans you can grint your operas py t'e score.

MARIANNE—*(triumphantly)* And your crazy insane spirit—you will leave it up here on the roof garden forever wiz zee pink roses?

KARL—Yes; I shall leaf it here on t'e roof garten for-efer—for-efer— wiz t'e shpirit of Constance.

MARIANNE—*(rising quickly and putting on her cape)* Ah mon cher Karl! mon petit génie!

KARL—Putt you must leaf me here a few moments alone, Marianne, pefore my poty comes town to your limousine.

MARIANNE—Oui, mon cher Karl; I will leave you here alone so your body can say good-bye to zee angel who will fly down from zee sky to kiss you wiz her cool wings and take your spirit away wiz hers forever—forever. Oh, how glad I will be when your body is rid of zat crazy spirit! But mon cher Karl must stay not too long wiz zee angel?

KARL—No, Marianne; only a few moments.

MARIANNE—And if mon cher Karl stay longer zan zat, I will tell Henri to blow zee horn of zee limousine to remind him. Zree times he will blow. Zree times—loud and long!

KARL—I vill pe listening, Marianne, ant my poty vill

come town. I promise you—promise you fait'fully: my poty vill come town to your limousine on t'e sitevalk ass soon ass you plow your horn.

MARIANNE—Ah, to zink zat you will no longer be Zee Insane Composer! *(She takes up her handbag.)* Remember, mon cher Karl: zree times—loud and long! I will pack your clothes; Henri will carry zem to zee car.

KARL—T'ree times; lout ant long.

(In her excitement she rushes off without her hat, still wearing the nurse's cap on her head.

After a short and peaceful silence, during which Karl *continues to smell the fragrant roses, the clock in the church-steeple strikes the hour: nine resounding clangs with seemingly long intervals between them.*

After the last stroke a drunken Janitor, *with rather uncertain steps, appears in the double doorway with a sprinkling can. He waters the plants in the boxes in front of the windows all the while whistling "Coming through the Rye," stopping here and there at the most unexpected places in the melody and then, after a hic-cough, continuing from the place where he left off. He pulls up the awnings.* Karl *is unaware of the* Janitor's *presence, and the* Janitor *does not see* Karl *since the bench is turned away from him. However, in glancing quickly about to make sure that no one is going to be locked out, the* Janitor *does spy* Marianne's *hat; he examines it very closely, and then, taking up the watering can, he showers copiously the artificial flowers with which the hat is trimmed and, satisfied, returns the hat to the chair. Then he closes the double doors, bolting them noisily from within. Next he closes the windows and latches them noisily. Then he extinguishes the inside lights one by one, after which his whistling grows fainter and fainter.*

The roof is now very dark. The color in the west has faded away entirely, but a large star has appeared, seemingly at the very pinnacle of the spire on the church-

steeple. The star is growing brighter and brighter. Karl *places the roses on the bench and removes the folded paper from his pocket. He unfolds it and holds it up to his eyes; the star emits a shaft of diverging rays of light which illumine the paper.)*

KARL—*(reading aloud and slowly)* I vant—I vant to tell you—t'at—t'at you haff chainch't t'e course off my life—chainch't it from eefil to goot—ant I vish you to know t'at I luff you—luff you for toing it—luff you vit all my soul.

(He lifts the paper to his lips, then folds it and places it in the pocket of his jacket next to his heart. He picks up the roses again, taking a long deep breath of their fragrance and then placing them on the bench. As he looks up, he sees the star for the first time; he lifts his arms to it as its light falls about him.

From the street far below, the horn of a limousine sounds three times: the first horn is rather loud; the second one, much softer; the third one, scarcely audible.

He rises from the bench and, using his crutches, walks to the railing. Leaning his crutches against the railing, he crawls through it slowly and carefully, the star all the while lighting the way. Standing on the outside of the roof with his back against the railing, he throws one of the crutches: it seems to float silently through the air and keeps on floating, for one does not hear it strike the earth. He throws the second crutch; there is likewise no sound. The stained glass window in the church-tower becomes illuminated from within, and strains of music—a paraphrase of Schumann's "Warum?"—come softly from the far-away organ. With outstretched arms and with lighted face lifted ever upward to the guiding star, Karl Lindenfels *slowly approaches the edge of the roof, the curtain descending and screening the picture.)*

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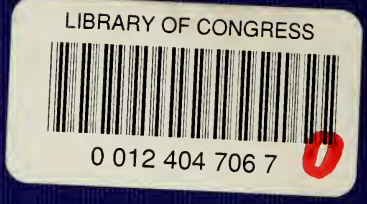
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